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ÉCARTÉ;

OR,

THE SALONS OF PARIS.

"In very faults shall afford amusement, and under them he may, without the formality of a preceptor, communicate instruction."—*Preface to 1st ed. Disowned.*

"A novel, not professing to be a mere tale, (with which it is often confounded, but from which, I think, it should be carefully distinguished,) the materials for interest are not apprehend, to be solely derived from a plot."—*Ibid.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

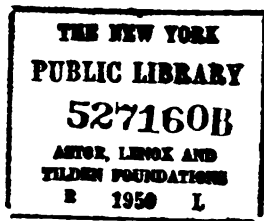
VOL. I.

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ÉCARTÉ.

CHAPTER I.

“STEAM!—steam!—eternally steam! steam packets across the Atlantic—steam engines for our manufactures—birds hatched by steam—linen washed by steam! Why, surely, this is nothing less than the Promethean fire stolen from Heaven in former days, and since fallen into disrepute. No project is now undertaken without steam. The whole secret of our existence will be reduced to the universal influence of steam: we shall live by steam—die by steam, and go to Heaven, or to the other place, by steam. What say you, Clifford? what is your idea of this most gigantic of human inventions?”

This oration, the longest he had ever been known to make on any other subject than foxhunting and the gout, was uttered by Sir Edward Delamaine, an elderly, good-natured baronet, of Norman descent, who, comfortably seated over his wine in Grosvenor-street, with his legs wrapped in flannel, was performing the two-fold operation of discussing his second bottle of claret, and reading the *Courier* for the evening. At the opposite extremity of the table, sat a fine dark-looking young man, his nephew, who, like most nephews, in a *tête-à-tête* with an old uncle, was evidently indulging in thoughts that had not the most remote connexion with anything around him. He had regularly settled himself into a musing attitude. His legs were crossed—his left hand was thrust into the bosom of his waistcoat, and (a *point d'appui* having been formed by the curvature of his right arm, the

elbow resting on the highly polished table, along which it occasionally slipped to his evident annoyance) his head had the benefit of support from the other—while his body, like that of his companion, was half turned towards the faint fire which, even in the early part of September, the health of the invalid rendered, in some degree, indispensable to his comfort. From this incipient reverie he was now suddenly awakened, by the long and singularly energetic exclamation of the baronet, who had, moreover, thrown down the paper with a movement of impatience.

"In truth, my dear uncle," he replied, smiling, and glancing at the paper, which contained a prodigiously long puff on the properties of steam, "the universality of this invention cannot be questioned; and I confess I am not without a belief that steam will, after all, be discovered to be the real philosopher's stone—the great secret of wealth and improvement. We shall soon, I dare say, see armies manœuvred by steam, and even the good city of London removed to the coast by steam, for the benefit of sea air in the season, without any interruption to the ordinary course of business. Moreover, I expect we shall have steam carriages, and (we are told so in 'The Mummy') steam orators, and steam statesmen."

"True, true," rejoined the baronet, musingly; then, after a pause—"Do you know, Clifford, that I have a great curiosity to try the motion of a steam vessel? What say you to a trip to the continent? Perhaps change of air will have the effect of ridding me of this infernal——"

"Gout," he would have added, but a violent twinge, at that moment, contracted every feature of his somewhat ruddy countenance, and prevented the conclusion of the sentence.

"Most willingly," replied the young man, as soon as the momentary pang had passed off; "for, independently of my desire to fall in with any plan that has your health for its object, I confess I think it high time

that I should see something of the continent myself. It is now two years since I left Cambridge, and—”

“Good, good,” interrupted the baronet; “we shall set off immediately; I to enjoy the pure air of the French capital; you, of course, to bask in the sunshine of beauty. Ah, Clifford, Clifford, I wish from my soul that you would think of marrying.”

To this observation his companion made no reply; but, taking out his watch, remarked that it was time for him to dress for an evening engagement: and he left the room, as if to avoid all further conversation on the subject. With an expressive “humph,” the gouty baronet resumed his paper, and the easy position from which he had been momentarily deranged.

Preparations of any description are certainly nowhere sooner than in London. At an early hour on the following Monday, the carriage of Sir Edward Delmaine was at the door of his residence. His gout had considerably subsided, but the good baronet was too much a favourite to be suffered to depart, without every due precaution being taken to guard him against the sea breeze and other casualties. His housekeeper, a respectable old lady of fifty, had literally buried his legs in a bed of flannel, so that when he appeared at the hall door, he had more the appearance of a mummy than of a traveller. With some difficulty, the butler contrived to raise him into his seat, amid the repeated entreaties of Mrs. Carey that the bandages might not be deranged. Recollecting that she had only confined him in a box-coat, of a thickness sufficient to impede the usage of his arms, the good lady hobbled into the hall, and soon reappeared with a cloak of voluminous dimensions, which she successively charged the two domestics by whom they were accompanied to throw over Sir Edward immediately after their embarkation. This important point being settled, the carriage was driven off, followed by the prayers of the household, collected to take leave of a master whose excellent qualities of heart and disposi-

tion, had long since rendered him an object of universal esteem and veneration.

It being the wish of the baronet to travel by easy stages, two days were employed in the journey to Dover : and on the morning of the third, although the wind was particularly unfavourable, they embarked on board the steam vessel for Calais. Apprehending a renewal of his malady, Delmaine had prevailed on his uncle to retire to the small cabin which he had engaged for the purpose ; and, protected against the inclemency of the weather by the ample folds of his cloak, remained himself on deck. Here he found a temporary amusement, in contemplating the different groups, of all ranks and conditions, promiscuously huddled together, and discussing their meditated movements on a land already encumbered with visitants of a description little calculated to impress any very favourable opinion of English manners, and English society, on the minds of the various continental people.

"Do you think we shall reach Calais without accident, sir?" inquired a huge mass of moving clay, whose habiliment alone proclaimed the sex to which it belonged, while the Stentorian lungs, dappled cheeks, and abruptness of manner, sufficiently indicated the class of the querist.

The person interrogated deigned not a reply ; but, fixing the speaker with a look of mingled surprise and indignation, appeared to wonder at a question from one so apparently unimportant.

"Do you think we shall reach Calais without accident?" repeated the lady, in no way moved or discouraged by the repulsive manner of her neighbour.

"Really, madam," at length muttered the gentleman, anxious to disembarass himself of his uncourtly companion, and looking round to see if any person of seeming consequence was attending to the colloquy, "I fear we are not without considerable danger—the clouds are gathering fast—the wind, already high, is increasing

every moment, and the appearance of the sea indicates an approaching storm."

"Good Lord, sir! are you serious?" and the arm of the informer was compressed within a grasp of no very feminine nature.

This was falling from Scylla into Charybdis, Much offended at the liberty, but more vexed at certain marks of sarcastic pleasure imprinted on the features of such of his fellow passengers as were inaccessible to the nausea of sea sickness, and consequently disposed to enjoy a scene, the continuation of which promised to afford some amusement, the first impulse of the person called on, was to repel familiarity with silence; but, aware of the necessity for self-command, and unwilling to appear wanting in *savoir vivre*, he replied, though in a tone of ill-suppressed irritation, that he was perfectly serious, every thing indicating a tempest; and, after briefly exposing the inconvenience of her remaining on deck, concluded by strongly recommending her to retire to the cabin as a place of safety.

"Oh, la! that ever I should have been so unlucky as to trust myself on the wide sea in a gale of wind," exclaimed the lady, heedless of the admonition, and turning her large gray eyes up to heaven with puritanical expression.

The tone in which this ejaculation was uttered, contrasted too forcibly with any thing that had hitherto met the delicate ears of her companion, not to inspire him with absolute horror. Energy of language is generally accompanied by energy of action. The exclamation of the lady was followed by an increased pressure of the arm, which drew from the body to which it was attached, an interjection of a no less fervent character.

"Good Heaven! madam," he vociferated, his dignity fading before the violence of the pain,—“you have the grasp of a bear.” A general and vainly-suppressed laugh proclaimed the amusement of several of the passengers. The lady, however, very unceremoniously passed her arm entirely through that of the sufferer, in-

timating that she should thus secure a protector from danger, without being subjected to a repetition of the injury.

The patience of her companion was now nearly exhausted. Annoyed, mortified, and confounded, at the perseverance with which this singular and unfashionable personage continued to persecute him, he wished her, from his soul, at the bottom of the sea ; and, though he succeeded in repressing any other demonstration of ire, the expression of his countenance bore too ample testimony to his feelings, to render them an instant doubtful. The contrast of their persons heightened the ridicule of the scene to the last degree, the gentleman being excessively tall and thin, the lady unusually short, and gifted with a rotundity of form, not unlike that of one of the puncheons over which she had all the appearance of having, at one period of her life, presided.

After a short pause—"Do you visit Paris, sir?"

"No, madam, my route is Brussels."

"How very sorry I am—we should have been pleasant company, sir, had you been going to Paris."

"Very pleasant company indeed," was the reply, accompanied by a smile of contempt, playing upon an upper lip peculiarly formed for the expression of ill-nature.

"At least, you will see me safely landed in Calais, and prevent the custom-house officers from robbing me."

The unhappy sufferer stared—"Have you much to lose, madam?" he demanded, in a tone of sarcasm, and glancing at the "sea dress," as she termed the once crimson gown, which was partly visible, beneath an equally rusty bath cloak, extending half way down her body.

"Oh, Lord, yes ; I have brought over two new dresses for Lucy and Fanny, the exact patterns of those to be worn at the Lady Mayoress's next ball ; two pairs of new satin boots——"

The list was here interrupted by a movement on the part of the gentleman, who, disengaging his arm with

extreme violence, withdrew the necessary equilibrium from his companion. Falling in a singular position, this unfortunate personage now left exposed to view a pair of legs, which might have served as representatives of those of the knight of Windsor. At this moment, a sudden plunge of the vessel threw the tall gentleman off his legs, and immediately across the body of the lady, offering to the admiration of the delighted passengers, a more animated figure of a cross than had ever before been represented in a similar manner. Their arms, meanwhile, were far from proving unnecessary appendages, those of the lady being warmly employed in boxing the fallen culprit's ears; while those of the latter, more peaceably disposed, caught at every object within his reach, in order to extricate him from his situation. At length, as a last resource, he grasped at the leg of an elderly gentleman wrapped in a plaid cloak, leaning over the side of the vessel, and very unwillingly disgorging a breakfast which had cost him half a crown at the London Hotel. The person thus assailed, *à l'improviste*, not having time to secure himself, soon came also to the deck, uttering, as he fell, the very pathetic exclamation of "Blood and wounds! what do you mean?"

At length, the two gentlemen succeeded in regaining their feet, when Clifford, who had been a silent spectator of the scene, attracted by the cries of the lady, and the unfeeling mirth of the passengers, came forward to the assistance of the former. Raising her, though not without some difficulty, from the deck, he offered to conduct her to the cabin, where several berths were at that moment unoccupied.

The ire of the injured personage was somewhat appeased by the polite manner of Delmaine, who, mildly renewing his offer of service, tendered the assistance of his arm.

"Thank you, sir, you are really a gentleman," vociferated the dame; "but as for that fellow, who is starched and stayed like a dandy, it is well for him that he is

going any where but to Paris, otherwise my son would find him out, and punish him for an impertinent, that he is. I'll have him know—"

The rest of the philippic was lost to those above, the unwieldy frame of the speaker having disappeared along the steps conducting to the cabin.

The effect produced by this speech, on the person whose extreme rudeness had called it forth, was obvious. The expression of his countenance had entirely changed, and he stood in the attitude of one sensible of a fault, and studying the means by which a reparation might be accomplished.

In a few minutes, his determination appeared to be formed, and, hastening below, he left the curious and gaping crowd to comment at leisure on the singularity of his conduct, and the probable cause of his descent; while, as usual in such cases, and in strict conformity with the propensity of the animal man, some half-dozen followed at intervals, and under various pretexts, in order to gain wherewith to amuse themselves and friends on their journey.

The increased violence of the wind rendering the motion of the vessel excessively unpleasant, and the rain beginning to fall rather heavily, Delmaine was soon glad to follow their example. Throwing himself into a vacant berth, he attempted to remove, by compression, the disagreeable sick headache almost invariably produced by the noise and odour of steam.

The scene had wholly changed. Harmony and good humour appeared to have been restored between the contending parties, and the recent offender had adopted an amiability of manner, towards the object of his late disgust, which could not fail to surprise individuals so inquisitive as the generality of those who had witnessed the original rupture. Several whispered wonderings, and expressive glances, attested the workings of curiosity; but it seemed neither the inclination of the gentleman, nor the intention of the lady, to throw any light on the significant smiles of the few who had been spec-

tators of the reconciliation, and who absolutely laboured under the weight of a secret which they burned to disclose. The latter had divested herself of her outer garment, and appeared busily occupied in arranging the before-mentioned dresses of Misses Fanny and Lucy, the enumeration of which had led to her catastrophe; it being found impossible to dispose of them in the ordinary manner, their voluminous proportions admitted, at least, of the passage of the body, compressed as if by a strait waistcoat, and at the great hazard of rending in twain those very valuable specimens of city taste and elegance. While busied in passing the sleeves under her arms, and securing them by the aid of strings, pins, &c., her eye unluckily caught the fixed stare of a rough, weather-beaten soldier, with a pair of mustachios not unlike those of a tiger-cat. This severe looking object, lay extended in a berth immediately opposite to that occupied by Delmaine, and was contemplating her movements with a very natural and justifiable portion of surprise. The idea of his being a custom-house officer, immediately occurred to her, and, turning to her companion with evident panic—

“Do, my dear Mr. Darte, only look at that man with the mustachios; I am sure he is a custom-house officer—I know it from his eye—I shall lose all I have—what will Lucy and Fanny say?”

“Pardon me, madam,” returned Mr. Darte, interrupting her chain of exclamation, uttered in as doleful a tone as the roughest of female voices could possibly attain—“you are in error; that person cannot be attached to the custom-house. He is in the undress of a French officer, and his *bonnet de police*—”

“Police, ah! yes; I was certain he belonged to the police—pray offer him half a crown—that is much less than the duty, you know.”

“Really, madam,” replied her companion, with a humility rendered more remarkable by the recollection of his former hauteur, “you misunderstand me. The forage cap worn by military men is termed, in France,

a *bonnet de police*, and that which he wears indicates his claim to the rank of an officer."

The words, mustachios, *bonnet de police*, France, and French officer, together with the occasional glances of the passengers, leading the soldier, who was totally ignorant of the language, to consider himself the object of some ill-timed *plaisanterie*, he started from his recumbent position, and twisting his mustachios with one hand, while with the other, he placed his *bonnet* in an attitude of defiance, demanded, in his own tongue, and in terms of extreme volubility, the subject of their conversation.

The gentleman explained, while the lady, alive only to her fears of custom-house officers, and fancying his object was to extort money, drew forth a dirty green silk purse, and took from it a half-crown piece, which she tendered as unceremoniously as she would have done to a beggar in the street.

The fury of the Frenchman was at its height—his eyes flashed fire, and he absolutely foamed at the mouth. Turning fiercely to the person he had at first accosted, and in language half inarticulate from emotion—"Sans doute, Monsieur, vous êtes le mari de cette dame, et vous me rendrez raison—Je suis militaire, Monsieur—Je suis Français, Monsieur—Je suis homme d'honneur, Monsieur—quelle indignité!" and the irascible soldier continued to rant and beat his breast, until it resounded like the hollow of a kettle-drum.

Again the gentleman explained, and, endeavouring to show the error of the lady, as rather a source of mirth than a motive for anger, sought to appease the choler of the petulant Gaul.

"N'importe, Monsieur; je me trouve insulté, et vous me rendrez raison—sac-r-r-r-r." The noise produced by the articulation of the last expressive word, was so like the springing of a watchman's rattle, that the several females in the cabin, as if by one common instinct, stopped their ears with their fingers, while one or two burst into an immoderate fit of laughter.

This was adding fuel to the fire of the offended party. His antagonist, however, wanted not courage. Finding every demonstration of a peaceful nature ineffectual, he coolly and emphatically observed—

“I have not the honour of being that lady’s husband, sir;” (“*quel honneur !*” muttered the Frenchman;) “but, as she is without any other escort, and you have thought proper to make me responsible for an error originating in herself, I shall be happy to afford you that redress which you seem to require. Any arrangements will be better made on deck.” And he motioned to withdraw.

The determined manner in which this reply was made, acted at once on the vehement soldier; who, assuming a milder tone, declared he could not think of rendering Monsieur responsible for the actions of Madame, with whom, it appeared, he was in no way connected by the ties of relationship. He professed himself perfectly satisfied with the first explanation, and, after some dozen inclinations, which were returned by an equal number of awkward reverences on the part of the unwieldy Mrs. Rivers, retired to digest any remaining bile, at leisure, in his berth.

The person who had given rise to this confusion, being utterly ignorant of the French language, and consequently unacquainted with the nature of the scene she had occasioned, could not avoid expressing astonishment, that her “good English silver,” as she termed it, had been refused, and with no less satisfaction at being spared the necessity of making so material a sacrifice, returned it to her purse. Her champion, however, conceiving it proper to explain the error into which she had fallen, together with the consequences it had threatened to entail, disclosed as much of the subject of altercation as he deemed sufficient to render her more circumspect in future.

Peace was, for a second time, restored; and a very amiable disquisition ensued on the French character, in which the opinions of sagacious individuals, who had never before lost sight of their respective habitations,

were delivered with much freedom, and more prejudice ; when the sudden cessation of the action of steam, and the increased pitching of the vessel, in announcing the termination of the voyage, drew the passengers, confusedly and clamorously, on deck. Their destination had, however, been gained only in part. They were then in the offing, but, in consequence of the reflux of the tide, it was found impossible to enter the harbour. No alternative was left, for those who did not prefer being tossed about at the pleasure of the elements, but to avail themselves of the boats, several of which were rapidly approaching, and manœuvring to reach the vessel without accident.

Men, women, children, spaniels, night-bags, and umbrellas, were huddled, without order or distinction, into each boat as it arrived, and packed off like so many bales of merchandise ; the former part of the cargo to be bid for by every hotel keeper in the place, whose numerous and annoying agents, thronging the piers and infesting the public streets, are instructed to assail every passenger on his landing, and to fasten, like harpies, on those who have the weakness to yield to their clamorous importunity.

In a few minutes the deck was cleared, so that, with the exception of a gentleman and his daughter, who had occupied the body of their carriage during the passage, Delmaine and his uncle were now the only remaining persons. The last boat had approached, and Sir Edward, being assisted on deck, recognised an old friend in the stranger, a tall handsome man, apparently about forty-five, whose deportment bespoke the gentleman and the soldier.

The hurried forms of introduction being gone through, and the whole party with their attendants embarked, the boat was pushed off, but, owing either to the awkwardness of the crew, or the mismanagement of the helmsman, they were in the greatest danger of foundering, and all was, for the space of a few minutes, confusion and dismay. Excessively terrified, the young lady grasped

the arm of her father, whose anxiety for his child spoke in every feature of his intelligent countenance. Sir Edward stamped, regardless of his gout—the boatmen swore—all commanded—none obeyed, and their danger was very imminent. At length, the bark, one gunwale of which had been nearly a minute under water, was restored to its proper position; and although the violence of the tempest dashed the waves over their heads in a fearful manner, the harbour was finally gained without further accident, much to the satisfaction of the crowds collected by interest or curiosity on the quays, who expected every moment to see the boat overwhelmed by the magnitude of the sea.

Their names and addresses being left at the custom-house, our voyagers lost no time in repairing to Quillacq's, wither the domestic of Sir Edward had been despatched in one of the first boats, to prepare apartments and an excellent fire.

CHAPTER II.

IF voyaging by steam has its advantages, it is at least attended by one serious inconvenience in bad weather, and possibly there are few persons who know not from painful experience, that a headache, produced by the motion of a steam-vessel, is infinitely more violent than any other to which poor flesh is heir. Such at least was the opinion of our party, who, after having partaken of a few slight refreshments, were glad to repair at an early hour to their respective apartments; Sir Edward gravely remarking, as he slowly ascended the staircase, that his curiosity was at length gratified, and much he feared to his cost: the humidity and cold had in some measure aroused his dormant tormentor,

strong symptoms of whose irritation were momentarily becoming more evident.

It was not until a late hour on the following morning, that the party appeared in the breakfast-room. Delmaine, however, had been some time risen, and was then engaged in the perusal of the *Journal des Débats*, containing a bulletin of the French King's declining health, when Miss Stanley entered, reclining on the arm of her father, both yet languid from the effect of their fatigue. Throwing aside the paper, our hero hastened to receive them; and as the young lady replied to his polite inquiries after her health, he fancied he had never beheld a woman more strikingly interesting.

Helen Stanley was then in her twenty-second year. Her figure was of that height and proportion which give to the majestic a certain sylph-like flexibility of movement, leaving the judgment in suspense between admiration and love. Without being strictly regular, her features were handsome; and the paleness of her complexion contrasting with two full dark eyes, whose general expression was that of languor, while they were occasionally lighted up by all the fires of enthusiasm, indicated a mind given to profound reflection. Her hair, of a length and thickness common only to those who have derived their being under scorching suns, was of a dark auburn, giving an air of luxury to her whole person, which it was impossible to observe unmoved. Her arm, delicately white, was terminated by a hand of exquisite proportion. Her movements, though free and unstudied, bore that character of voluptuousness which is in general the effect of coquetry; but which in her, sprung only from the ardent feelings manifested in every line of her speaking countenance. Such was the person of Miss Stanley—the being formed after the model Delmaine had ever fancied of female beauty. No wonder, that in contemplating the dangerous syren, he should have forgotten that his uncle was an invalid, and incapable of descending without assistance.

Recalled to himself by a question from the colonel,

he left the room, and soon re-appeared with Sir Edward, who, congratulating his friends on their comparatively good looks, and himself on the vagueness of his apprehensions, added, that the most sensible thing they could do was to pay their court to the excellent breakfast smoking on the table—a proposal which met not with one dissenting voice.

The conversation turning on the singularity of the meeting of the two friends, at the moment when one was supposed to be several thousand miles distant, the colonel informed Sir Edward that ill health had compelled him to abandon the luxurious climate of the east for ever, and that, by the advice of his physicians, he was then proceeding to the South of France, where it was his intention to remain until time and regimen should effect his restoration. He added, that he had made no other stay in London than was absolutely necessary for his own and daughter's repose; and pleaded the determination he had formed of partial seclusion, as an excuse for not having waited on the companion of his younger days.

Unwilling to admit the apology, the baronet good-humouredly avowed his intention to revenge himself for his friend's neglect, by insisting on his passing with him the period intended for his own sojourn in the French capital.

With a languid smile, the colonel turned to his daughter. "Do you hear the decision of Sir Edward, Helen? And are you disposed to acknowledge his authority?"

The fine eyes of Helen were lighted up with momentary vivacity; and she hastened to assure her father that the wishes of Sir Edward Delmaine were too much in unison with her own feelings, to meet with the slightest opposition from her.

Our hero, who, notwithstanding his admiration of the speaker, had not found his appetite at all impeded by the occasional homage of his eyes, heard this engagement entered into with pleasure; for in the course of

their meal, he had discovered much of mind in the various remarks elicited by their conversation, and he longed for further opportunity of forming a more decided opinion.

A message was here delivered from the colonel's coachman, stating that one of the carriage springs had been broken in the landing, and that it could not be repaired in less than two days.

"Just like the French," muttered Sir Edward: "twenty years ago they were as much advanced as they are at present, and what in England would be done in a few hours, cannot here be accomplished in as many days."

As Calais offered little to attract the attention of the stranger, its principal curiosity being the impress of the late king's foot on the pier, carefully preserved in brass, and ostentatiously pointed out to the visiter, the departure of our travellers had been fixed on for the same day. In this dilemma, it was deemed necessary to have recourse to the master of the hotel, and Monsieur Quillacq was accordingly summoned.

With reverences innumerable, Monsieur Quillacq entered the breakfast-room, and in reply to a question from the colonel, professed himself quite *au desespoir* at his inability to procure him a carriage sufficiently large to contain two persons with their attendants. Several English families, who had arrived the preceding day, had taken all the *chaises de poste* in his possession, and he greatly feared it would be difficult to find one sufficiently commodious in Calais, a great demand having been made for conveyances at all the hotels, by the travellers of the preceding day.

Amid the disappointment produced by this information, an idea occurred to Delmaine which promised to remove every difficulty. He accordingly proposed that his uncle, the colonel, and Miss Stanley, with a part of their domestics, should occupy the carriage of Sir Edward, leaving the remainder of the servants to follow with the second vehicle as soon as repaired, while he

secured a seat for the following morning in the diligence.

This suggestion, warmly seconded by Sir Edward, was, after some hesitation on the part of their friends, unwilling to subject Clifford to the inconvenience, finally adopted, and in the course of a few hours their temporary adieus were exchanged, and the carriage was driven off as fast as five post horses, excited to their utmost speed by the multiplied reverberations of the postilion's whip, could possibly convey it over the heavy and irregular pavement.

The morning was passed by our hero in visiting the English reading-room in the Place d'Armes, and in lounging on the pier, where parties of his countrywomen were grouped in such numbers as to make him half imagine himself on his native shore. The shrill cries of the sturdy *poissardes*, preferred in accent almost unintelligible, however, reminded him of his error.

Dinner being announced soon after his return from his ramble, he sought to shake off at the *table d'hôte*, an unpleasant feeling of solitude that had gradually been creeping over him since the departure of his friends, though he could not well determine whether it originated in regret at the separation from his uncle alone, or whether another individual of the party had contributed to call it forth. The latter motive he was unwilling to confess to himself, and bringing a few glasses of Champagne to his aid, soon found in the exhilarating beverage, a temporary relief from the reflections into which he had been so disagreeably plunged.

The evening was spent in visiting the Calais theatre, where a very inferior company of comedians were then engaged. The entertainment consisted of the inimitable "Tartuffe" of Molière, and the "Soldat Laboureur," a piece of decided popularity in France, and calculated to awaken the liveliest recollections of their former glory. For the wretched performance of the first, Delmaine was in some measure compensated by that of the

latter, in which every character seemed to be felt and understood.

Among the most remarkable of the English audience, was the celebrated G—— B——ll, of fashionable memory. Delmaine, who, in common with all mankind, had heard much of his skill in tying a cravat, and the delicacy of his taste in perfumes, felt some little curiosity to know how far he merited his reputation in these momentous points; and, as he occupied the adjoining box, he found no difficulty in obtaining a perfect view of the "Lion." Notwithstanding the most scrupulous attention, however, he could not perceive anything in the "knot divine," to entitle it to rank above those of our less veteran exquisites; and he conceived that he was in the habit of using nearly as good perfumes himself. The reputation of the exile, however, he knew was too firmly established to be shaken by the breath of detraction; and he was compelled to admit, that whatever might be his individual opinion, the circumstance alone of B——ll having deprecated the idea of taking malt with cheese, was, in itself, sufficient to stamp him with immortality, and entitle him at once to the admiration and imitation of Fashion's noblest votaries.

The heavy rumbling noise of the diligence at an early hour on the following morning, announced the moment of departure to our hero, who, never yet having visited France, was not a little surprised to find this cumbrous vehicle to be the machine in which he was to perform his journey to the capital. Five stout and vigorous horses, whose trappings were various as their own hues, stood neighing and pawing in their harness; and the *conducteur* vociferating loudly for the *Voyageur Anglais*, he hastily finished his coffee, and threw himself into his seat; when the postilion, literally jumping into the enormous boots which stood waiting for his reception in the yard, mounted the near wheeler, and drove off at full speed, drowning the adieus of the bystanders, the clamorous appeals of the beggars, and the yelping of the curs, in the more deafening sounds produced by his whip.

Perhaps there are few travellers who have not found the road from Calais to Boulogne excessively dull and monotonous, especially during the hotter season of the year; when the eye, fatigued by the oppressive rays of a meridian sun reflected on the white roads and cliffs, vainly turns to rest on some point of relief in the distance; or, discouraged by the long extent of barren country which it embraces, feels desirous to shut out exterior objects altogether, until a more animated and less unbroken prospect shall be offered to the view.

Such at least were the feelings of Delmaine, who had no sooner passed the barriers and suburbs of Calais, than he withdrew his gaze from the dull surrounding country, and amused himself with observing the *compagnons de voyage*, all of whom were French, and consisted of a female and two men.

Immediately opposite to him sat one of the latter, whose conversation and appearance bespoke the merchant; and in the next angle, a short, vulgar-looking man, who had all the air of being, what he subsequently avowed himself—an officer of infantry. The seat on the right of our hero was occupied by the female, a woman who appeared to have numbered nearly forty summers. Her person was full and commanding; her skin of a fairness not usually met with in France, and her blonde tresses fell in luxuriance over her forehead. Her eyes were of a light blue, and she had the air of being what the French so energetically term, *une femme voluptueuse*: yet she was not handsome; for although her features were not deficient in regularity or expression, her teeth were discoloured, and her face, though fair, was not free from certain spots, which in vulgar English are termed grog-blossoms. She held a child of four or five years of age on her knees, whose white locks and skin fully marked it as her own.

The French are not long in making their advances towards acquaintance. The officer broke the ice by some cursory observation. The lady replied. The

merchant introduced a remark, and the conversation became general between the trio.

In five minutes, the merchant had revealed his name and quality, the officer his rank and profession, and the lady's history was entered upon.

Madame Dorjeville announced herself as the widow of a colonel of cuirassiers, who had fallen a victim to the severity of wounds received at Waterloo. The period which had succeeded to this event, she said she had spent in America, on a visit to some connexions of her lamented husband, residing in Philadelphia, from whence she was now on her return to Paris, for the purpose of applying for a pension from government. This affair terminated, it was her intention to retire to her native province in the south, and there devote herself to the education of her child. The language she made use of was elegant : her tone and manner were those of a woman accustomed to good society ; but our hero could not reconcile these qualities with the freedom of a disclosure thus made to persons who were evidently strangers.

Both the merchant and the soldier had listened eagerly to her recital, as if reluctant to lose a word, and they were now loud in their offers of service. Any thing in the world they could possibly do for her, they professed themselves ready and willing to undertake ; and they hoped she would honour them with her commands. Meanwhile, they vied with each other in attention to the child ; and, vowing it *charmant, un petit ange, un amour*, &c., left none of its wants unattended or ungratified. Madame Dorjeville placed her hand repeatedly on her heart—was overwhelmed by their politeness, and confessed her inability to reply to so much considerate attention as she ought. In the course of conversation, and while taking out his pocket-handkerchief, the merchant accidentally discovered a large silk purse filled with Napoleons. It was, however, instantly restored to its place.

Although Englishmen may, at first sight, deem the name of diligence ill applied to the conveyances used

in France, they must eventually admit that travelling in that country is nearly as expeditious as it is in England ; and when it is considered, that instead of a smooth hard road, the wheels of the vehicle have to run over a great portion of paved country, in which those of a carriage of a lighter description would prove of little service, the vaunted advantages of celerity of movement on which we so much pride ourselves, will appear less the result of perfection in our travelling system, than of the excellence of our roads ; neither can it be denied, that scarcely more time is taken up in the relays in one country than in the other. Within the last ten years, travelling in France has become much more expeditious ; and the journey from Paris to Boulogne performed in seven-and-twenty hours, as it is at present, is certainly an evidence of the truth of this assertion. One decided advantage which the French diligence have over the English stage-coach is, independently of the easiness of motion, its utter freedom from those impure odours which are so offensive in the latter, and which may be attributed to their being lined with cloth, subject to frequent humidity, instead of plush, as is invariably the case in France.

Boulogne, Montreuil, &c., were successively passed by our travellers ; and the new-made acquaintance of the French party was rapidly ripening into intimacy. They had dined at Montreuil, and at midnight alighted at Amiens to partake of a bad supper, which they were compelled, as usual, to leave unfinished, in order to answer the *allons, Messieurs et Dames, en route*, of the conductor, too well versed in the interests of the house to suffer his charge to run the risk of indigestion on the way—a service invariably recompensed by a meal gratis for himself.

At Beauvais, on the following morning, they stopped to breakfast, and had scarcely reached the *salle à manger*, when the *soi-disant* colonel's widow, after a long and ineffectual search on her person, and in the diligence, announced the loss of her purse, containing sixteen Napoleons, three five-franc pieces, and some smaller coin.

Her new friends were quite afflicted at the circumstance, and warmly sympathized in her grief. The merchant at length suggesting the possibility of her having forgotten it at Amiens, she expressed a similar belief, and conceived that it had been left on the table of the room into which she had been shown on her arrival. A courier was immediately despatched on horseback, with directions to bring it, if found, to an address which she gave him in Paris, and after having swallowed her breakfast with an appetite evidently impaired by her recent loss, she resumed her seat in the diligence.

Delmaine, who had preceded the vehicle on foot, in order to regain some of that elasticity of which his uneasy position during the night had robbed him, was soon overtaken. He was struck, on entering, by the change of manner which had been operated on his fellow-travellers. The eyes of the female were swollen, and her cheeks bore the marks of recent tears; she was then pensively reclining over her child, her head supported by her right arm placed against the angle of the carriage. The officer sat with his arms folded across his breast, and appeared to have lost all his former vivacity. The merchant's eyes were closed beneath a pair of bushy eyebrows, nearly as black as the silk *bonnet de nuit* with which his head was ornamented; but their occasional twinkling proved his aim to be less repose than the exclusion of the objects before him. The silence was only broken by the lively and unanswered remarks of the child, addressed to the officer, whose hand was no longer held forth in token of amity and affection.

Our hero sat musing on the scene before him, and was at a loss to account of a stillness, rendered more striking by the extreme volubility in which the parties had previously indulged. Madame Dorjeville he naturally conceived might feel some little disquietude for the loss she had sustained; yet, as there was some probability of the purse being found at Amiens, he could scarcely attribute her present despondency to this motive alone; but he could not find the slightest clue to the behaviour of her

countrymen, who, instead of rallying her, and endeavouring to offer consolation, were evidently as studious to avoid all communication, as they had previously been to attract her attention.

A key to the mystery was, however, soon afforded : at the foot of a steep hill, the pace of the horses was slackened for the ascent, and most of the passengers choosing to alight, Delmaine found himself alone in the carriage with the widow, and addressing her for the first time, expressed at once his regret for her loss, and a hope that it would not be attended by any serious inconvenience.

The lady returned her acknowledgments for the interest he seemed to entertain in her favour, and regretted to observe, that although the sum in question was a very trifle, she felt its loss as a severe evil for the moment, being utterly unprovided with other funds in Paris, where she must remain until a remittance could be sent from her friends in the south. She added, that she had already requested the merchant to do her the favour to become her banker for ten or fifteen Napoleons, until a reply to her letter should be forwarded with the necessary remittance ; but that he had very ungalantly declined, under the plea of her being an utter stranger to him. The officer, who had been caressing her child at the moment of her application, no sooner heard the request and answer, than, apprehensive, probably, of a similar demand on his own purse, he abruptly discontinued his attentions, and adopting the chilling air of reserve which had been assumed by his companion, suddenly changed his loquacious manner, for the unbroken silence which had surprised Delmaine on his entrance, and had since continued to prevail.

Our hero, though kind hearted and generous, was not a hero of romance—or, in other words, he had not that unreserved faith in the perfection and disinterestedness of mankind, which, when carried beyond the bounds of probability, leads one less to applaud the heart than to question the judgment and the understanding. Certain

circumstances in the course of the lady's narrative, and some part of her conduct during the journey, had impressed him with rather an unfavourable opinion of the person with whom he was now conversing ; yet he could not unconcernedly behold a female, whose appearance certainly indicated her claim to a respectable rank in society, while her language and manner proved her by no means destitute of education and accomplishments, thus subjected to probable inconvenience, with the additional charge of a young child. He felt for the humiliation she appeared to endure in the abrupt refusal experienced from one of her countrymen, and the subsequent altered conduct of both ; yet although the sum she required was a mere bagatelle, and, notwithstanding he had even sought the present opportunity of making a tender of service, both his pride and his self-love caused him to shrink from the idea of becoming the dupe of a woman who might, after all, prove a mere adventuress.

At length, generosity and feeling triumphed over every more narrow and prudential consideration, and apologizing for a liberty which he said he hoped would find its excuse in circumstances, he entreated Madame Dorjeville to accept a few Napoleons from his purse, expressing his regret at the same moment that he could not conveniently offer more. The eyes of the disconsolate widow brightened at the view of the proffered sum, which she declared quite sufficient to meet her necessities until her remittance should arrive. She insisted on having Clifford's address, in order to acquit herself of the obligation the instant it should be in her power, and Meurice's Hotel was at length named as the place where any letter or message might be sent.

They had now reached the top of the hill, and the rest of the party resumed their seats. Some surprise was manifested by the two Frenchmen at seeing the Englishman, who had hitherto borne no part in the conversation, then in close conference with their countrywoman, and several significant glances, which escaped

not the attention of our hero, were exchanged between them.

The remainder of the journey was performed without incident, and at five in the afternoon, the gay spires and stately edifices of Paris were distinctly seen in the thin vapours which floated over the city like sheets of transparent silver. The rays of the declining sun, falling on the gilded dome of the "Invalids," threw an air of liveliness over the congregated mass of white buildings, and contrasted forcibly with the solemn tolling of the ponderous bells of Notre-Dame, then ringing the knell of some departed and exalted personage. At length the barriers were passed; and in less than half an hour the diligence was driven to the place of its destination.

The door of the carriage was no sooner opened, and the steps lowered, than the merchant and his companion, who had evidently dreaded a second application from the widow, darted through the opening, without even uttering the "adieu," so seldom forgotten in their courteous soil, even among travellers and strangers, and our hero, following, assisted Madame Dorjeville to alight. As she reached the ground, some hard substance fell from within the folds of her dress, and as it struck on the pavement, Clifford fancied the sound resembled that of a somewhat heavy purse. Of this, however, he could not assure himself, the lady having, in evident anticipation of his movement, instantly stooped to pick it up, and in such a way as to prevent his having a view of the object. When she rose, nothing was visible in her hand except the pocket-handkerchief, in which she had tied up the gold he had given her, and which had not been quitted even for a moment. Her face was suffused with a deep crimson, but this might have proceeded from the action of stooping, and it speedily passed away; Delmaine then handed her into the *fiacre*, which at her request had been called, and throwing himself into another, repaired to his hotel.

CHAPTER III.

It had been arranged previous to the departure of Sir Edward and his friends from Calais, that as some delay must necessarily occur in reaching the French capital, Delmaine should undertake the charge of providing suitable apartments for their immediate reception. On the following morning, therefore, our hero hastened to acquit himself of his mission. On sallying forth into the Rue de Rivoli, by the back entrance to Meurice's, he found his progress impeded by a vast concourse of people stationed around the Palace of the Tuileries, and in the adjoining streets. They were assembled, he found on inquiring, to take a last view of their sovereign, Louis the Eighteenth, whose decease the imposing *bourdonnement* of the bells of Notre-Dame had announced on the preceding evening, and whose body then lay in state, and was open to the curiosity of the public.

The demeanour of the people was suited to the occasion—an utter stillness pervaded the different groups, who waited with philosophical patience beneath a burning sun, until those who preceded them should be admitted, and consequently hasten the moment of their own gratification. People of all ranks and descriptions, and of both sexes, urged by the same restless spirit of curiosity and love of novelty, which pervades every class of this light nation, were mingled together; and Delmaine could scarcely suppress a smile, on witnessing the anxiety evinced by all Paris to view the disfigured remains of wretched mortality, clad in the trappings which render death even more hideous. He could not, however, avoid rendering justice to the decorous behaviour of the crowd, and in contrasting it with what he had seen in England, on nearly similar occasions, felt that preju-

dice itself must award the plan of correct deportment, among the lower orders of society, to the French.

Hopeless of making his way through the throng, he was on the point of returning, in order to gain the Rue St. Honoré, by the front entrance to the hotel, when he observed a gentleman making a similar effort to disengage himself, and advancing towards the Rue Castiglione. The back of the stranger was turned towards our hero, but he fancied the figure was that of an old friend; and, hastening to overtake him, their recognition was mutual—"Delmaine!" "Dormer!" were the exclamations, preferred with warmth, and accompanied by a cordial pressure of the hand. In a few minutes the crowd was passed, and Clifford, having mentioned the object of his search to his friend, was accompanied by the latter to the Hotel Mirabeau, in the Rue de la Paix, from whence a family of his acquaintance had departed the preceding day, leaving a handsome and commodious apartment, *au second*, unoccupied. This they found still vacant, and Delmaine, after some objections to the two pair of stairs, which were not overruled by the assurance of Dormer, that the most respectable families were glad to procure apartments even *au quatrieme*, in the fashionable quarter of Paris, finally decided on taking one which was vacant on the first floor, and after having advanced *les arrhes*, which *Madame le propriétaire* said it was usual to receive, took the arm of his friend, and returned to Meurice's.

In the pleasure experienced at thus unexpectedly beholding one, to whom he had in earlier years been attached by a similarity of tastes and feelings, Delmaine had not overlooked the change operated on a countenance, formerly glowing with the rich hues of health, but now overcast with a paleness produced by recent care and suffering. His manner had also undergone a revolution: instead of the gay Frederick, who had once been the life of their boyish sports, he beheld with concern a being on whose every feature profound traces of sadness were imprinted; while in the occasional sarcas-

tic sallies which had escaped him during their short walk, he had observed, that misanthropy and distrust lurked at the bottom of a heart formerly susceptible alive to hope and confidence.

Much hurt at the evident alteration in his friend, Clifford, with affectionate earnestness, inquired the cause; and Dormer, without hesitation, proceeded to disclose all that had occurred to him since their separation.

"I have suffered much," he said, "both in body and in mind; and though I have had some cause to inveigh against the selfishness and cold-heartedness of mankind, I cannot deny that my trials have originated in myself, and that to one unhappy and predominating vice in my nature, must be attributed much of the torturing misery which has consumed my youthful days, and almost shut out every avenue of my mind to consolation or happiness. Hear, however, what I have to unfold, and although the retrospection is ever attended by painful emotions, I shall feel but too happy if the story of my follies tend to guard you against the temptations to which you yourself may be exposed, and prevent your touching on that rock, on which hundreds of young Englishmen, rich in health and worldly advantages, have already split in this pleasure-stored metropolis.

"To trace the gradations of weakness, it may be necessary to advert to an early period of my existence, when, leaving a public school for the more extensive theatre of the field, I left you glowing with youthful ardour and pleasure, to join my regiment, then in Canada, and on active service. I will not occupy your attention with a detail of our operations, during the short but arduous struggle, against an enemy superior in numbers, and combating under the many advantages afforded by the covered state of his country, and the proximity of his resources; neither will I paint the singular and ferocious modes of warfare peculiar to the Indian tribes ranged beneath our standards. Let it suffice, that the regiment was at length finally overpowered by an overwhelming

force, and the surviving officers and men carried into the heart of the enemy's country.

"To the former, the privilege of parole was instantly accorded, and it was during our passage for our final destination across one of the lakes, that the germ of vice first budded into being. There are few countries, perhaps, France not even excepted, where a passion for play is more painfully manifested than in the United States of America. All the officers of the army and navy, with a very few exceptions, make it to constitute their chief study and amusement, and the sun often dawns on the flushed and discoloured countenances of those whom it had left agitated by the various and contending emotions excited by the smiles or frowns of Fortune.

"Our voyage was unhappily more tedious than is usual in those countries; and recourse was had to play, by the officers of the vessel, during a calm of several hours continuance. Three-card loo, their almost universal game, was introduced, and several of my companions sat down to the table. My finances were extremely low, consisting simply of ten half eagles, an American gold coin of the value of five dollars. Aware of the difficulty I must experience in procuring a supply, and convinced of the necessity for husbanding my little stock, I for some time resisted the temptation. I felt gradually creeping over me. I had seldom before touched a card; the duties of my profession, and a constant state of active service, calling for the employment of my time in a very different manner. I continued for some minutes to look over the hand of an American, and found the game simple, while I could not avoid deeming it interesting; I felt myself strongly tempted to try my fortune, and at length yielded to the renewed invitations held out to me.

"The blind goddess, it is said, generally favours the novice at his outset, in order to lead him more effectually into error; but I had no reason to tax her with a treachery of that nature in the present instance.

When I arose from the table, I had lost half my money, and the mortification I experienced in consequence was bitter in the extreme. I deeply lamented the folly of my conduct in suffering myself to be led by the persuasions of others into the commission of violence against my prudence and better judgment, and I looked forward with concern to the future. Remote from my friends, a prisoner, and rendered incapable, while such, by the regulations of the service, from drawing on the regimental staff for a shilling, my prospects wore not the most flattering aspect. As I leaned over the deck, watching the calm surface of the lake, my unlucky genius suggested to me the idea of seeking my remedy in the disease itself: and although my reason and better sense reproved the measure, as one fraught with additional ill, my own secret inclination favoured the design. The latent spark had been kindled—the dormant spirit of play had been awakened—and from that moment, the subsequent trials of my life may date their origin.

“An opportunity for retrieving my losses did not, however, again occur on board; for soon after this, my first initiation, a fresh gale springing up, soon carried us to the point where it was intended the officers should be landed for the purpose of being conveyed into the heart of the American wilderness. Our journey was then prosecuted on horseback; and under the escort of two or three officers of the United States army, appointed to provide us with such accommodation as could be found on the route.

“Play was the occupation of several at night; and although cruelly punished throughout my subsequent life, for my then acquired habits, I can never recall without a smile the picture of our party, seated often in the heart of a forest, where, in the absence of any human habitation, we were sometimes compelled to repose from the fatigues of our journey. A fallen tree, covered with a cloak or pocket-handkerchief, constituted our table; and, squatted like savages on the ground, we usually played by the glaring light of the birch bark,

supplying the absence of a candle, and falling on our harassed and anxious countenances, as we threw the cards successively on the board ; at a little distance, our more sensible companions, wrapped in their cloaks, enjoyed that unbroken slumber which awaits on bodily, but is seldom the attendant on mental fatigue ; and our horses stood quietly grazing in the back ground—all tending to fill up the measure of a scene which would not have disgraced the pencil of a Hogarth.

“ Having, after much toil and difficulty, gained the spot selected by the American government for our future abode, the parole, originally accorded by the general officer into whose hands we had fallen, was continued ; and we availed ourselves of the interval to profit by the hospitality of many of the more respectable inhabitants, who seemed to vie with each other in their endeavours to banish from our minds the unpleasant sensations arising from a sense of captivity.

“ Among the first of these in rank, and pre-eminently distinguished by every quality which can refine the heart and adorn the understanding, was Mr. Worthington, a gentleman, whose hospitality extended its soothing influence to us all, and was in the sequel more immediately directed towards myself. In the home of my nativity, I could not have experienced more kindness or met with more grateful attention ; and the remembrance of his worth has survived the feelings of bitterness, occasioned by the rigidity and stoicism of his inflexible virtue. But let me not anticipate.

“ Mr. Worthington was a widower ; and one loved and beauteous daughter, under the immediate protection of a maiden sister, composed his family. Agatha was worthy of such a father. To a mind highly cultivated, and a purity of feeling, equalled only by the tenderness of a heart alive to every nobler and more generous impulse of humanity, she united those glowing and luxurious beauties of person which distinguish the females of the American continent, even at an age when in northern Europe they are regarded as mere children. With

Agatha I soon became a favourite ; she was then in her sixteenth summer, and my junior only by two years.—Caressing and affectionate, her soft blue eyes would fill with tears, as, adverting to my family, she often dwelt on the anxiety they must entertain in respect to my fate, all communication between the two countries having been cut off from those whom the fortune of war had thrown into captivity.

“ At those moments I felt for her all the endearing warmth of a brother, and the unreserved testimonies of her interest made a deep impression on my heart. The friendship which, in our first hours of abandonment, we vowed to preserve for each other, gradually ripened into a warmer sentiment, and Agatha freely acknowledged the force of an affection, the extreme purity of which could not call up a blush to the cheek of either. Those were, indeed, happy days. A gay and unclouded future was unfolded to my view ; the present was only shaded by a privation of liberty, which had every appearance of being temporary, and was softened down by the kindness and hospitality of public enemies converted into private friends : while a recurrence to the past brought with it no stings of self-reproach to poison the bowl of anticipated felicity.

“ Mr. Worthington had observed our growing partiality for each other ; and, tenderly alive to the happiness of his beloved daughter, disapproved not of an attachment which the apparent steadiness of my character, and the information obtained from my superior officers, left him no reason to object to, on the score of morals and connexion. Independently of my commission, I was only entitled to a property of two hundred a year on coming of age, my present exigencies being liberally, though not extravagantly, supplied by an allowance from my father. This, however, was a secondary consideration ; rich himself, in worldly, as in intellectual wealth, the fortune Mr. Worthington intended to bestow on his daughter, was sufficiently large to insure, not only ease, but affluence, to her and to the partner of her

choice. Such, Clifford, was the prospect that awaited me, until my own blind and unaccountable folly, in depriving me of the esteem of this excellent parent, dashed the cup of happiness for ever from my lips.

“ Five months had elapsed since my first introduction into this amiable family, when intimation was received from the seat of government that a partial exchange of prisoners was contemplated ; and as the parties to whom the intelligence was conveyed felt deeply interested in the result, it was particularly specified that our detachment was to be comprehended.

“ The pleasure which this information diffused over every heart, was such as can only be conceived by persons similarly situated ; for although the hospitality and attention of the more respectable inhabitants fully compensated for the insults to which we were not unfrequently exposed from the rabble, whose detestation of the English name was carried to an unaccountable pitch, a sense of captivity chilled every principle of action, and damped the satisfaction which, under any other circumstances, we must have experienced.

“ To testify their participation in our joy on this occasion, our friends redoubled their efforts to amuse and entertain us during the short period we were expected to remain, and parties of various kinds were formed at their country seats, in many of which reigned an air of almost eastern luxuriousness.

“ I had accepted an invitation to pass a few days at a neighbouring watering place, in company with several young men ; and thither, after taking an affectionate leave of Agatha and her father, I repaired early in the month of June, with a brow unclouded by care, and a heart filled with delightful visions of the future.

“ At H—is—g, as at most other watering places, cards were a favourite amusement of the society ; and, as an amusement, it could not be productive of serious evil, the stakes being, during the period of my stay, extremely low, and the game limited. While this continued, I fancied, in the true spirit of the player, that no

material risk could be incurred in falling in with a pursuit followed by all, and attended by inconvenience to none; and my late resolutions vanished before the plausibility of my arguments. For a time I played so low as to impress myself with a belief that amusement alone was my object, not that a growing passion was seeking aliment for its sustenance. I did not consider that if my stakes were not higher, and my interest in the result consequently more intense, it was not because the principle was less powerfully ingrafted in my heart, but because those with whom I then played were more bounded in their desires, and made it less a study than an amusement.

"A melancholy opportunity soon offered to undeceive myself. Among the numerous party who daily assembled in the card-room was an American officer, my senior by several years. Play was his predominant passion; and, finding the stakes too moderate to satisfy his thirst, and interest his attention, and possibly reading in my countenance certain indications of a similar disposition, he proposed our forming a separate game. After some little hesitation, eventually overruled by my evil genius, or, more properly, my natural propensity to gaming, I assented, and we withdrew to a private room, where cards were instantly brought to us. As my purse had been replenished by the kindness of an American banker, who, in the most gentlemanly and liberal manner, had cashed bills for a number of officers on their several friends, without letters either of advice or credit, I was enabled to meet the proposal of my adversary in regard to the stakes, which were certainly much higher than was consistent with my relative position.

"At the close of the third day—and during the interval, we had only risen from our seats to partake of a slight refreshment, and had torn up nearly fifty packs of cards, the fragments of which lay scattered on the floor as silent attestations of our madness—I found myself, after alternate gain and loss, eventually a winner of about twenty eagles in ready money, and a creditor to my less fortunate opponent in a much larger amount.

“Elated by my success, I fancied that I had at length succeeded in chaining the fickle goddess to my car, and my broken and agitated slumbers bore the impress of my waking thoughts. Cards, trumps, and gold, were the objects which presented themselves, almost exclusively, in my dreams; and during my stay at this fatal place, the image of the affectionate and gentle Agatha scarcely once arose to banish these my present idols from my heart. Oh, Clifford, how humiliating to my soul is the recollection of my unworthiness. How do I blush to think, that while this fond girl was indulging in those pleasing anticipations which swell on the spotless bosom of pure and sacred love, the object of her thoughts was spending those moments, which should have been devoted to nobler pursuits, in the shameful indulgence of a vice, the almost inevitable results of which are debasement and destruction to every generous feeling of the mind. In colours too faithful and too forcible does the past frequently present itself to my imagination; and even that consolation of the wretched, which robs suffering of its sting—a freedom from self-reproach—is denied to me.

“Among the various strangers attracted to H—is—g by curiosity, a partiality for the waters, or, what was more usual, a partiality for play, was an individual, a temporary sojourner in the place which contained those most deeply interested in my welfare. Of this man, I had a very imperfect knowledge, having met him only at public assemblies; and his repulsive manner and unprepossessing appearance had ever inspired me with an antipathy for his person, as if nature or instinct had pointed him out for the being destined to be the cause of my future misery.

“One evening, after having finished our wine at the public table, or ordinary, as it is termed in America, cards were introduced, and several of the party joined in the game. After having played for two or three hours with indifferent success on my side, they gradually and successively withdrew, leaving the person in question and myself alone at the table. My adversary, who

subsequently proved to be a transatlantic *chevalier d'industrie*, led by my youthful appearance to deem me, what in fact I was, a mere novice at the game, and judging from the ardour with which I played, that I might easily be tempted to risk the contents of a full purse, which he saw laying before me, proposed our entering on increased stakes, and for a given time. Emboldened by my recent success, and warmed with wine and previous play, I assented to a proposal which, under any other circumstances, my extreme dislike for the man would have caused me to decline, and our watches were placed on the table. Notwithstanding his superior knowledge of the game, manifested in the course of the sitting, and the penetrating glances of his quick eye, frequently fastened on my countenance, as if to behold reflected there the cards which I held in my hand, fortune stood once more my friend, or rather my enemy, and at the expiration of the time agreed on, I found myself winner of seventy-five eagles, composing almost the total amount of my adversary's purse:

“Rage and disappointment swelled highly in his bosom, and his sallow visage became even more frightful in the livid paleness with which it was overspread, as, frowning from a pair of shaggy eyebrows, beneath which two small gray eyes darted an expression of ferocity, he arose from his seat, and quitted the room, uttering terrific imprecations against his ill fortune.

“On returning to rest at a late hour, I felt dissatisfied with myself. The impression arising from my last acquisition was entirely different from what I experienced after my success with the American officer. I knew that in the first instance I had engaged with a gentleman; whereas in the latter it seemed to me that I had committed myself, in remaining *tête-à-tête* with a man of whom I knew nothing; and for whom I entertained the most unqualified dislike. A sort of fearful apprehension, a gloomy foreboding of evil, preyed on my mind, and I vainly sought relief in repose. I also fancied the loss of his money might be felt by him as a serious inconve-

nience ; and in this belief I was confirmed by a recollection of the agitation which overspread his countenance at the moment of his rising from the table. I have always played more for the sake of indulging a passion than with the mere abstract view of gain, and I cannot better exemplify the truth of this observation, even to myself, than by a recurrence to the fact of having ever derived more pleasure from the acquisition of a sum of money at play, attended by all its risks, agitations, and uncertainties, than by that of one of treble amount left me by some relation or friend. At that period of my existence, it may be presumed that the love of gold was not a reigning passion, and that a desire to find some plausible motive for restoring the winnings, which lay heavy at my heart, to their late possessor, was not the result of any severe effort of resolution.

“ On the manner of effecting this restitution it was not, however, easy to decide ; and, I at length adopted that which alone appeared feasible, that of inviting him on the following day to attempt a retrieval of his losses. My intention was to play in such a manner as to effect this object, and to return immediately afterwards to my friends at F——t. Satisfied with this arrangement, I finally became more tranquil, and succeeded in composing my spirits to rest.”

CHAPTER IV.

“ ON descending to breakfast on the following morning, I found the usual party assembled ; but the person whom I more immediately desired to see was absent. On inquiry, I learnt from one of the domestics, that he had mounted his horse at daybreak, and left the place altogether. This intelligence I heard with mingled

regret and disquietude; but these feelings gradually yielding to the anticipated pleasure of a meeting with Agatha, of whom, as if recovering from a long reverie, I then began to think with renewed tenderness, I announced my departure for the following day. The friends I had accompanied entreated me to prolong my stay; but my reflections of the preceding evening had been of a nature to inspire me with disgust for the place. It seemed to me that in visiting it, I had paved the way to my own unhappiness; and one of those indefinable presentiments of evil, by which the human mind is so frequently assailed, weighed on my heart, and oppressed it almost to suffocation.

“In this state I continued during the whole of the day and succeeding night, and only found myself relieved on commencing my journey. The quick motion of my horse against a pure and refreshing air, perfumed by the various odoriferous plants and flowers which grew in wild luxuriance around, enlivened my spirits, and gave energy to my feelings. How strange and inconsistent is the nature of man! On approaching the town which contained her who was then dearer to my soul than all the treasures of the universe, I felt my heart dilate with a joy and fulness hitherto unknown; and all those sanguine sensations, by which my youth had ever been distinguished, rushed with impetuosity on my soul, and painted in glowing colours the raptures attendant on a meeting with Agatha.

“Light, gay, and happy, as I had been, a few hours previously, dull, morose, and discontented, I rode up to the door of Mr. Worthington’s mansion, and, throwing the reins on my horse’s neck, soon found myself in the presence of her I loved. She was alone. Her manner was affectionate and kind; but the traces of recent tears were visible on her cheek. An unusual sadness was imprinted on her brow, and her blue eyes were fixed on mine with a blended expression of interest and reproach. Impetuously I inquired the cause, and she burst into tears. I fell at her feet, and pressing my burning lips

on her trembling hand, sought to soothe her into composure. Then obeying a sudden transition of feeling, I again demanded, with vehemence, the reason of this singular behaviour. Alarmed in her turn, at the wildness of my manner, she cast on me one of those looks of ineffable tenderness which were so exclusively her own, and that look-operated like magic on the disorder of my mind. Then taking my hand, 'Frederick,' she faltered, 'perhaps I am unjust; but my heart was wounded at the length of your absence. I had hoped that the short period of your further stay in this country would have been passed with those who love you, not devoted, as it has been, to the society of strangers. Politeness, and even inclination, might have induced you to form a limited engagement with those whom you accompanied to H—is—g; but I should be sadly disappointed and hurt to think, that while solitude and tears for your approaching departure have been my portion, you have thus willingly extended a visit of three days to one of nearly as many weeks. But let us think no more of the past. You are here at length, and Agatha is happy.'

"There was a solemnity in her mild voice, which afflicted me even more than her words; these fell like ice-drops on my heart, and I felt all the enormity of my conduct. I could not deny that I had cruelly neglected her, and that the delay which had occasioned so much pain to this fond and complaining girl, was only the fruit of a passion, which even *her* image, and the recollection of *her* worth, could not wholly subdue.

"My countenance became flushed with agitation, and my eyes burned within their sockets, for the impetuosity and susceptibility of my nature were at war within me. While the former called up the more violent workings of self-accusation, the latter rendered me painfully alive to a reproach which, even if unmerited, was from the object of my soul's devotion, as a rankling barb in my breast.—I was silent.

"'Frederick, have I offended you?' she continued, the tears chasing each other down her cheeks, and her

whole frame trembling with emotion. 'Oh speak to your Agatha—say that you forgive her!'

"'Forgive you!' I mournfully exclaimed; 'Agatha, I am unworthy of your affection, and sunk in my own esteem: yet do I doat on you, with a warmth and tenderness which makes reproach from your lips the most torturing of human punishments.'

"The scene which succeeded, I have long felt, ever shall feel, but can never describe. All that the tender ingenuity of artless affection could devise, all that endearing expression and caressing manner could effect, the fond Agatha exerted to soothe my mind, and restore me to my original self; but although my soul wanted in the luxury of tender abandonment, and freely drank in long draughts of bliss from the soft blue eyes, swimming in tearful pleasure, and half dimmed with tremulous emotion, I could not wholly overcome the truly painful impressions of the preceding moments.

"From the delightful, though not unalloyed visions of future felicity, in which our inmost souls indulged, we were at length aroused by the sound of approaching footsteps, and, in the next minute, Mr. Worthington entered the room. I sprang forward from my seat with affectionate earnestness, but my half-extended hand dropped nerveless at my side, as I remarked the cool and distant manner with which my salutation was received. Wounded and hurt beyond expression, I moved, mechanically, towards the seat I had just occupied; my cheeks were suffused with crimson, and my heart bounded with indignation. Agatha turned her eyes first on mine, with a look of unutterable interest, and then on her father, as if to ask an explanation; but his countenance wore an air of seriousness and severity which disconcerted her, and her gaze was instantly withdrawn.

"The conversation was evidently forced, and on general subjects. Not the slightest allusion was made to my recent absence; and the cutting politeness that had succeeded to the almost paternal tenderness with which Mr. Worthington had ever previously treated me,

alternately heated and chilled my blood. My mind was on the rack—my heart a prey to the most cruel emotions; and, unable longer to retain my self-possession, I rose to depart. Tears started to my eyes, and my swelling bosom felt as though a mountain weight hung on it; but though I could have fallen at his feet, who thus inflicted a thousand pangs on my soul, my pride supported me: and following up the example so cruelly given, I took what I intended should be a cold and ceremonious leave of the father, and faltering an adieu to Agatha, who sat reclining her head on the couch, and concealing her tears with her hand, I hastened from the apartment.

“On regaining my lodgings, my mind was worked up to the highest pitch of suffering, and my pulse was fevered with agitation. Yet, though desirous of shunning the observation of my brother officers, I could not endure to be left alone. Dinner was soon afterwards announced, and I hoped to find some relief in the gay society around me. The cloth removed, bumper succeeded bumper, but brought with it no cessation of suffering; and the animated conversation of my companions was lost on a mind wrapped in its own gloomy reflections. At an early hour, I retired to my apartment; but, incapable of chasing the weight which preyed upon my heart, and fatigued with vain exertions to seek forgetfulness in slumber, I arose, and, dressing myself mechanically, sallied out into the open air.

“The night was far advanced, and I directed my course towards the eastern suburb of the city, at the extremity of which, a figure, closely enveloped in a cloak, which entirely concealed the person, crossed the street within a few paces of me, and instantly returned. Heedless of the singularity of the circumstance, and absorbed in the different feelings by which I was assailed, I continued my walk along a dark avenue of thickly planted trees, whose luxuriant foliage and widely spreading branches formed an arch, beneath which, in summer,

the inhabitants daily sought shelter from the scorching rays of the sun.

"I had advanced a considerable way along this avenue, when the striking of a distant clock reminded me of the lateness of the hour, and I hastened to return. As I emerged from the sombre avenue, I beheld the same figure which had before attracted my attention at the very extremity, and apparently stationary. I was in the act of passing, when it came up to me, and throwing back the folds of the cloak, discovered the features of the individual from whom I had won the seventy-five eagles at H—is—g, and who had departed so suddenly on the following morning.

"Somewhat startled and surprised at his appearance, and displeased with this mysterious mode of accosting me, I demanded his business with me at such an unseasonable hour. 'That you shall briefly know,' he returned, in a gruff voice, which he endeavoured to reduce to the lowest possible key. He then proceeded to say, that he could not afford to lose the money I had won from him, and that if I had any regard for my future happiness, I would immediately restore it. He had heard my engagement with Miss Worthington spoken of since his return from the watering place, and it rested entirely with himself, he said, to destroy my schemes of happiness for ever, as her father, he was well informed, entertained the most decided antipathy to the character of a gambler, and had expressed his determination never to confide the happiness of his daughter to one imbued with the love of play. He added, that if the money was returned to him, he would bury the matter in oblivion for ever; and that a letter, which he had written for Mr. Worthington, to be delivered in the event of my refusal, should be committed to the flames.

"To comprehend the full meaning of this speech, and the risk which I incurred, you must be made acquainted with a material circumstance, which I had omitted to state in its proper place. Prior to my departure for H—is—g, it had been settled, that at the cessation

of hostilities between Great Britain and America, I should obtain leave of absence, and, furnished with a letter from my father, announcing his consent to our union, return to claim Agatha for my wife. Moreover, in the event of any future rupture between the two countries, I was to endeavour to avoid bearing arms against the land of her birth—or, if unsuccessful, to retire from the service ; but as I took no pains to disguise my predilection for a military life, the former course was to be adopted, if possible, in preference.

“The sensations by which I was governed during this singular address, were of the most opposite and tumultuous description—indignation at the insolence and villany of the speaker—confusion at the humiliation entailed by my own unpardonable folly—a dread of the just displeasure of Mr. Worthington, and, above all, the fear of being lessened in the esteem of her I loved—all flashed on my brain at once, and for a moment deprived me of the power of utterance. It had been both my wish and my intention to restore this fatal gold to its original possessor ; but to be thus bullied, and threatened, as it were, into an act which, to have the slightest merit, should be voluntary, was more than my hot nature could patiently brook. Feeling, however, the strong existing necessity for dissembling my resentment, I endeavoured to appear calm ; and, taking out the purse which contained his money, and which, owing to the agitation of my spirits, I had not once thought of depositing since my arrival, I handed it to him, observing at the same time, that it had fully been my intention to restore him a sum, the loss of which had so visibly affected him, and that with that view I had inquired for him on the following morning, when, to my great surprise, I found he had departed.

“He caught at the proffered purse with all the eagerness of one who finds himself in possession of an object long coveted and long despaired of ; then, with an insulting sneer, replied, that he gave me all due credit for my disinterestedness. ‘Of course,’ he added, tauntingly,

‘the possession of your mistress goes for nothing in the restitution.’

“This was more than I could bear. Springing over the space which divided us, I struck him violently with my cane; and turning round, hastened to continue my way. I had not, however, gone many paces, when a sharp weapon, plunged into my side, convinced me of the imprudence of which I had been guilty. The villain had no sooner effected his aim, than he darted down the avenue, pursuing a different course to that by which he had approached me, and with some difficulty I contrived to drag myself to my lodgings, where, notwithstanding my endeavours to keep the circumstance as secret as possible, the whole of the establishment were speedily informed of the accident.

“The wound, although painful, proved on examination to be slight—the weapon, probably a dirk, having glanced in an oblique direction; and the surgeon, after applying the dressing, and recommending quiet, expressed his opinion of a speedy release from the temporary confinement imposed on me. When left to the solitude of my chamber, I revolved the recent occurrence in my mind, and bitterly condemned the impetuosity of temper which had led to my present condition. Tracing the effect to its original cause, I more than ever reprobated the weakness which had brought me in immediate contact with a man who, in some measure, held my destiny in his hands, and from whose utter disregard of delicacy I had every thing to apprehend.

“How he had gained the information so insolently conveyed to me, I could not possibly divine, since I was assured that he was a personal stranger to the gentleman with whose sentiments he appeared to be perfectly acquainted; yet I could not deny that there was every foundation for a belief in its accuracy. Mr. Worthington, whose virtuous mind recoiled from the idea of all vice, and more especially that of gaming, which he conceived not simply monstrous and degrading in itself, but the forerunner of every other, had more than once

expressed his horror of a professed-gamester in my presence; and although I had not hitherto attached the full import of the term to my casual indulgence, now that my feelings were so susceptibly alive to the slightest impression of alarm, I shuddered at the bare possibility of his being made acquainted with the occurrences at the Spa. The coolness evident in his manner during my visit in the morning, must have proceeded from some uncommon cause; and for several moments I admitted the full conviction, that what it was so much my interest to conceal, and what I sincerely repented had ever taken place, was no longer a secret.

"This impression, however, gradually faded before the recollection, that the only person likely to bear testimony of my folly had been divested of all motive for evil intention in the restitution of his gold, and must feel an additional obligation to silence imposed on him, in the necessity existing for actual concealment. The reserve of Mr. Worthington I therefore attributed to my prolonged absence; and partly tranquillized by the admission of a belief so essential to my happiness, even amid all the unpleasantness attendant on the idea, I at length succeeded in composing myself to rest. •

"The day was far advanced when I awoke from a deep slumber, into which I had finally sunk; and, on turning round, the first thing that met my eye was a letter lying on the table. Glancing hastily at the direction, I perceived it to be in the hand-writing of Mr. Worthington, and again my presentiments of evil returned, and the blood receded from my cheek. With a trembling hand and fainting heart, I broke the seal, and more than once grasped and relinquished the folded paper, ere I could find courage to peruse the contents. At length, curiosity, and a desire to know the worst, triumphed over apprehension, and, with an effort of resolution, I read the letter to the end.

"It commenced with an expression of Mr. Worthington's concern at my accident—an accident, however, to which he said, he had certainly to attribute his know-

ledge of a blemish in my character, which, until contradicted, he felt himself compelled to make the ground of annulling the partial engagement formed in my favour. He had accidentally learnt something of the losses sustained by a young officer at the Spa, and had heard my name mentioned as one of those who were in frequent attendance at the card table: but as his information on that head was of a vague and uncertain character, he had not been able to arrive at any decided conclusion. The air of reserve which he said I could not have failed to remark in him the preceding day, was at once the effect of what he had recently heard, and of my singular absence from those with whom I had looked forward to be eventually more intimately connected. He had not, however, any doubt that, at the moment of my departure, I should have been enabled to reply in a satisfactory manner to the question he intended putting to me on the subject on the following day.

“ In this belief, he added, he had continued until the present moment, when the receipt of a letter, from a person he found on inquiry to be well known, and avoided, as a disreputable character, had put him in possession of a detail of occurrences, stated to have taken place at H—is—g. He added, that he would make no comment on the singularity and inconsistency of the fact (if such) of my engaging in a gaming transaction with a man of whom I had not evidently the slightest previous knowledge, neither would he take the liberty of recommending any rule of conduct for my future guidance. After a full and circumstantial exposition of the objections he must ever entertain to the character of a gambler, (and if what had been urged was true, the principle of play must be inherent in my nature,) he concluded by repeating that, until I could afford a refutation of the contents of the letter in question—and my simple denial would be sufficient—I must for ever renounce all thoughts of his daughter.

“ Remorse, shame, grief, rage, despair, and ven-

geance, were feelings which crowded tumultuously on my heart during the perusal of this chilling letter. How did I burn to punish the unprincipled wretch who, thus adding refinement of cruelty to coward assassination, had struck so deeply at the root of my happiness. I could at the moment have felt a savage pleasure in witnessing the sufferings my hate and vengeance would have inflicted. But of this there was no hope. The letter before me intimated that he had abandoned the state for another, in order to avoid any pursuit that might be instituted.

“By degrees this violent feeling subsided, and remorse for my conduct, and grief for the loss which that conduct had entailed, acted but with less vehemence on my mind. Then, again, all the impetuous passions of my soul rose in arms. With the wayward inconsistency of my age, and of my actual impressions, I taxed Mr. Worthington with duplicity and selfishness, even at the moment when I felt overwhelmed by the bitterest stings of self-accusation; and anxiously seizing an idea which inflicted even a more refined torture, I nursed into conviction the thought that Agatha repented of her engagement, and joined with her father in casting me off for ever.

“The first idea which occurred to me on regaining a certain degree of self-possession, was to reply to Mr Worthington’s letter, and the task was undertaken with the feelings of a-condemned criminal, who entertains not a hope of that pardon which the suggestions of despair alone induce him to solicit. Without seeking to veil or soften down the folly of my conduct, I fully admitted the accuracy of the information conveyed to him; but added, that if the most sincere and unqualified regret could be considered as an atonement for the past, and a guaranty for the future, I might yet cherish a hope, that the severe though just determination expressed in his letter would be repealed. Youth and thoughtlessness I offered as pleas in extenuation of my errors; and solemnly promised that no human consideration

should ever induce me to relapse into a similar weakness. I also made an affectionate appeal to his heart, urging my present sufferings as a sufficient punishment, and conjuring him not to sink one so young into the lowest abyss of despair, by retracting an engagement, to the fulfilment of which I had looked forward with the most sanguine hope and exultation.

“ Although I had formed little expectation of any favourable result to this letter, aware as I was of the stern severity with which Mr. Worthington ever adhered to his decisions, I felt greatly relieved after having sealed and despatched it, and I waited his reply with the calm apathy of a man who has prepared his mind for the worst evil which can be inflicted.

“ It was not until a late hour on the following day that a second communication, couched in less formal, but no less decisive terms, confirmed my anticipation.— Mr. Worthington confessed himself interested and touched by the candour of my avowal, but repeated his firm intention never to intrust the happiness of his daughter to one who, even at that early age, had given proofs of a passion for which he could find no excuse, and which, once rooted, could never be wholly eradicated. He stated, that Agatha had been made acquainted with his determination, and knew her duty as a child; but he preserved an absolute silence in respect to the manner in which that determination had been received. The letter was closed with an expression of regret for the circumstances which had given rise to our epistolary communications, and a hope that I would not attribute the decision he had been compelled to adopt to caprice, but to the watchful jealousy of a father, anxious for the future felicity of his child.

“ There is a limit in human suffering, as in human pleasure, beyond which the delicacy of our mental organization will not suffer us to advance. The perusal of this second letter, instead of calling forth the more turbulent passions which had hitherto raged with such ungovernable violence in my breast, was attended by

a calm, a sensation of indifference, for which I could not then account, and with which I felt extremely dissatisfied. Vexed at this tranquillity, I accused myself of coldness and insensibility, and tried to arouse my feelings to their original intenseness. I thought of Agatha—of all I had lost with her ; and I endeavoured to persuade myself that anger and disappointment should be my predominant emotions. But in vain did I strive to excite myself. The chords of my mind had been stretched too far, and, weakened by use, they could no longer regain their former elasticity. I experienced, moreover, a kind of sullen joy in cherishing the thought that she for whom my heart bled at every pore, had received the communication from her father with unconcern, or that she found no difficulty in consoling herself for the sacrifice of her lover, in the idea of duty attached to the accomplishment of a parent's wishes. This impression, added to the circumstance of her never having once sent to inquire after the health of him she affected to love, and who, she must be well aware, then lay, wounded, and on a bed of suffering, tended to confirm me in my apathy.

“I had not, however, been forgotten. About an hour after the receipt of Mr. Worthington's letter, a more gentle missive was brought to me by a female confidential slave. It was from the aunt of Agatha, and contained the most touching expressions of concern for the unhappy circumstances which had led to her brother's rupture of our engagement. By this excellent woman I had ever been regarded as a son; and her kind nature now wept for the sorrows she could only endeavour to alleviate. Agatha, who had been deeply affected by the command of her father to abandon all idea of having her fate united to mine, was confined to her bed, where she now dictated those assurances of tender interest and unchanging affection, which her gentle and pitying relative hesitated not to transcribe. After intimating the possibility of a more favourable change in our prospects being effected in the course of time, she

concluded by recommending the utmost caution in replying to her letter, as, although her heart condemned not the step she was pursuing, she apprehended a more rigid censor in her brother.

“In my reply, I painted to Agatha all the cruel sufferings by which I had been assailed since our separation—repeated my firm resolution never to forget or prove false to the vows we had interchanged—and, after pouring forth the grateful acknowledgments of my heart to her aunt, concluded, by soliciting her, in the name of that tender affection she had ever borne me, to contrive an interview with Agatha prior to our departure, which had been finally decided on for the ensuing week.

“My request was accorded; and the last evening we were to spend in F—k—t, was that fixed on for our meeting. How anxiously did I await the moment which was to give Agatha, perhaps for the last time, to my view—how often did my imagination dwell on the rapture I should feel in pressing her once more to my heart, and in hearing her lips avow her ceaseless love. It seemed to me as though I had never sufficiently availed myself of my former happiness, and that every moment which had not been passed in her presence, had indeed been lost to me irreparably and for ever.

“At length the moment arrived which was to see me stealing like a midnight thief to the presence of her who had lately, and with a father’s sanction, regarded me as the being destined to be her companion and friend throughout existence. The mansion of Mr. Worthington was situated in an isolated quarter of the town, and immediately opposite to the building in which our party was lodged. An extensive garden communicated by a small entrance with an alley, which was generally deserted after a certain hour in the evening; and towards that entrance, the key of which had been conveyed to me by the same confidential slave, I now directed my course. My wound, which, I have already remarked, had been superficial, was already closed, and a slight debility the

only ill effect remaining. No interruption of any kind retarded my progress ; and, turning the key with caution, the door flew open, and in the next instant Agatha was in my arms.

“With what emotions of delight did I receive the chaste and tender caresses of this amiable girl—tear-mingled caresses, of which her excellent aunt, by whom she was accompanied, did not once deem it necessary to disapprove. Mr. Worthington had an engagement to dine, and was not expected till a late hour, so that the present was at least not embittered by the dread of interruption. Miss Worthington soon retired to a distant part of the garden ; and then it was that our feelings, hitherto restrained by the presence of her we loved, overflowed in all the luxury of passionate tenderness. Protestations of never-dying affection fell from our trembling lips, which, in the next instant, were pressed to each other, as if the soul of each would have passed into the earthly tenement of the object of its idolatry. Our hands were clasped within each other, and the throbbing bosom of Agatha beat warm against my heart, as her pale cheek, coloured only by the hectic tinge of momentary passion, pressed against my own—her light hair flowing gracefully over her shoulders from beneath her loose hat, and her blue eyes fixed on mine with soul-touching expression. The eloquence of silence alone proclaimed our feeling, and the stillness of the night was unbroken, except by the faint breeze playing among the orange trees, which lulled us even more into forgetfulness of the past, and disregard for the future. The close embrace in which we were fondly locked, became gradually yet closer, until our glowing forms appeared as one, and the pulsation of each other’s arteries could be distinctly felt by both.

“‘Frederick,’ murmured the half-fainting girl, in accents which thrilled through my inmost soul, while a convulsive tremor shook her frame, ‘I am yours for ever!’

“I gazed again upon her cheek—it was suffused with burning blushes. For worlds, however, I would not

have sullied the purity of confiding innocence ; and the tender, beauteous, and now impassioned Agatha, was to me a being 'hallowed and enshrined.' Clifford, there exists not on earth a bliss equal to that I then enjoyed. While virtue ceased not a moment to throw her protecting mantle around us, our being was dissolved in rapture, and every thing in existence, save ourselves, was forgotten. The illusion, however, was too soon and too cruelly dispelled, by the approach of Miss Worthington, who now entered the arbour which we were seated ; and, in proclaiming the lateness of the hour, hinted at the necessity for separating. Again we vowed before heaven, and in the presence of this amiable woman, to live for each other, and never, under any circumstances, to pledge that faith to another, which had been so often, and so solemnly, exchanged between us. As the moment approached which was to tear us asunder for years—perhaps for ever—our hearts beat wildly, and the cruel adieu was uttered a thousand times, before I could find courage to depart. Miss Worthington sought to inspire us with new strength, in the assurance that every effort should be made, by herself, to effect a change in the sentiments of her brother ; and after pressing me affectionately to her heart, conjured me not to relapse into the indulgence of follies which had already cost, not only myself, but Agatha, so dear. I returned her embrace with warmth, and promised to be all she desired ; then taking a final leave of the now pale and trembling girl, on whose lips I left the last imprint of love, I at length succeeded in tearing myself from the spot.

“ The remainder of the night was passed in a kind of wild delirium. My agitated slumbers took their colouring from the events of the evening ; and Agatha, gay, animated, and happy, chased the image of the pale, weeping, disconsolate girl, that had the instant before occupied my dreams. Feverish and restless, I arose at an early hour to make preparations for my departure. These accomplished, I descended to the front of the hotel, where my companions were already assembled.

and selecting their horses from the number which had been brought for our service. Joy sparkled on every countenance, and animated the movements of all.—Those only who have known the rigour and restraint of captivity, can enter into the delight experienced by the languishing prisoner, when restored to that liberty without which life has no charm and suffering no end.—Every heart was light, save mine ; and while all awaited with impatience the arrival of the officers appointed to conduct us, mine throbbed with despondency at the idea of quitting scenes endeared to me by the first and purest transports of affection.

“Turning my eyes towards that point where all my thoughts were then directed, I beheld Agatha on the balcony, leaning on the arm of her aunt. She was clad in a loose morning robe of purest white, alternately floating in the breeze, and delineating her graceful proportions. Her cheek was pale, and half concealed by the handkerchief with which she wiped away the tears. No eye beheld her save mine, for every other was differently engaged, and I seized the opportunity to press my hand on my heart, and to waft a silent adieu, which was immediately returned by her aunt—Agatha remaining motionless with grief, and incapable of action.

“Many of those gentlemen, whose hospitality had left an indelible impression on our minds, were collected to bid us a final farewell ; and our imposing cavalcade only awaited the signal of the colonel of my regiment, then engaged in earnest conversation with Mr. Worthington. In a few minutes they separated, and the latter gentleman, for the first time since my receipt of his letter, advanced to salute me. Deeply as I felt myself wounded by the unbending severity of his nature, I could not be insensible to any mark of kindness from the parent of her I loved ; and to the pressure of his hand, and the wish, emphatically expressed, for my future happiness, I could not reply without emotion. Again I stole a look at Agatha, as I left a parting prayer with her father—her agitation had increased, and her tears evidently

flowed without restraint. Her sensibility had been excited to the highest pitch by the unexpected movement of her father, and she could with difficulty support herself. The signal was now given, and the party moved off. Again I pressed the extended hand of Mr. Worthington, and silently followed. On turning the angle of a street, I waved a final adieu, which was immediately returned by Agatha, and in the next instant she was lost to my anxious gaze for ever.

“It was long before my spirits could acquire any portion of that gayety which sparkled on the features of my happier companions; and during our long ride through the wilderness, I often lingered behind, to indulge without interruption in my melancholy reflections. On the evening previous to my departure, Agatha had presented me with her portrait, executed with singular fidelity. To gaze unobserved on the beautiful features was now my principal delight, and grateful did I feel for the gift of this angelic girl; not, however, that this was necessary to recall her image to my mind, since, in the surrounding scenery, I beheld but one object—the form of Agatha, which floated before my vision as we journeyed onwards. On the mountain, in the flood, in the cataract, in the plain, and in the forest, I beheld but Agatha. Now, with eyes softened into more than woman’s tenderness, her full and unsullied bosom swelling tumultuously with the feelings she dared not encourage, but could not wholly repress—now such as she appeared at the moment of our departure from F—k—t, pale, suffering, weeping, and personifying in her languor the image of despairing loveliness.

“Those were the situations in which she appeared more generally to my mental view; and in the contemplation of the picture my thoughts were frequently for hours absorbed. At length, this intenseness of feeling began gradually to subside; and as we approached the frontier, the consolation afforded by the possession of the portrait, and the certainty of receiving letters from Agatha, to whom I had given the address of a mer-

chant in Lower Canada, acting as my banker, once more awakened the dormant energies of my mind.

CHAPTER V.

“ON my arrival in Canada, I found that, prior to the receipt of intelligence in England, announcing our captivity, I had been promoted to a lieutenancy in one of the regiments serving with the Duke of Wellington in Flanders ; and as the treaty, soon afterwards concluded between England and America, had opened a communication by the way of New-York, which could not be effected until a much later period by the ice-encumbered St. Lawrence, I made every necessary preparation for my departure through the United States. Somewhat encouraged by the contents of two long and affectionate letters from Agatha, whose gentle, yet drooping soul, spoke in every line, and after having taken a kind farewell of the gallant corps in which I had made my *début* in arms, and provided myself with letters from the commanding officer to my new colonel, I left Montreal early in the month of March. The season of 1814 and 1815 had been the severest known in Canada for many years, and my journey was performed across Lake Champlain, on the bosom of which two gallant and hostile fleets had only a few months before contended for mastery. Now wrapped in its winter garb of ice and snow, it presented an aspect of sternest rudeness, while the congregated mass of congealed matter scarce even trembled beneath the weight of the ponderous sleigh in which I was rapidly borne by two small, swift, and vigorous horses.

“On reaching New-York, I learnt that no vessel would sail until late in April. This was a severe disappointment, as I had experienced much relief in the pre-

vious constant state of motion, which, in directing my attention to the stupendous and imposing objects that surrounded me, had softened much of the asperity of regret. The evil could not, however, be remedied ; and while I felt pained and annoyed at the idea of being once more an inhabitant of the same soil with Agatha, without a possibility of beholding her, I found some compensation in the opportunity thus afforded for communicating, once more, and at length, with her I loved. Meanwhile, I had renewed an acquaintance with the amiable family of General H——, an officer, who had fallen into the hands of our division at the commencement of the war ; and in the select and limited circle to which they introduced me, I passed the intermediate period. The daughters of the General were elegant, well informed, accomplished young women. What constituted their chief value in my eyes, however, was their proving to be old friends and companions of Agatha, from whom they had only been separated by the events of the war. They were not aware of any attachment existing between us, although they had been apprized of our acquaintance ; and the encomiums which fell from their lips when speaking of their friend, were grateful to my heart, because I knew them to be voluntary and unstudied.

“ Several weeks had elapsed without bringing a reply to my letter, and the departure of the packet for Liverpool was announced as an immediate event before it finally arrived. How different was the style, how forced the expressions which it contained. Assurances of affection it breathed ; but they were tame and passionless, and so unlike those of the Agatha I had known, that my full heart swelled with disappointment, and sickened with despair. Again and again I examined the handwriting, and dwelt on the signature. I could not be mistaken ; the characters were those of her whose words were late all tenderness and interest, and my heart became again a prey to the deepest suffering.

“ One long letter, expressive of my wounded feelings

and my surprise, preceded my embarkation; and in somewhat less than a month, wafted by propitious winds, we reached Liverpool, where I found a vessel preparing to sail for Ostend. In this I immediately embarked, and in a few days had the good fortune to find myself on the grand theatre so long distinguished for battles and for warriors—on the soil whose fair fields were again speedily to be moistened with human blood, and nourished by human putrefaction.

“ The dépôt of my regiment was stationed at Ostend, but the corps itself was at Brussels, where I joined it early in June. The operations of that month are known to all the world, and have been described by many pens. I will simply relate a circumstance which happened to myself on the memorable 18th, and which a very recent occurrence, that shall be explained in due season, has forcibly and painfully recalled to my mind. During one of the charges made near Hougomont, I received a severe contusion on the head, and was felled to the earth. Stunned by the blow, I continued for some seconds incapable of movement, but at length succeeded in raising myself on my knees. At this moment, the enemy's columns, powerfully supported, had obtained a temporary advantage, and were rapidly advancing. I made a desperate effort to regain my feet; but sunk, tottering and feeble, in the same attitude. I now gave myself up for lost, for already the bayonets of several French grenadiers—their eyes sparkling with furious excitement—were crossed in the direction of my breast, when an officer, whom I immediately recognised, by his epaulettes and authoritative manner, to be their commander, rushed forward, and saved me from impending death. There was no time for acknowledgments. I pressed his hand, in token of gratitude for the service thus opportunely rendered me, and was instantly despatched to the rear of the regiment, which proved to be the forty-first of the line. I did not, however, long remain a prisoner, for my division, reinforced by a few squadrons of cavalry, again advanced to the charge,

and the French columns being vigorously repulsed, the few prisoners they had taken were speedily recaptured by the victors.

“The battle of Waterloo having once more opened the gates of Paris to our troops, the scenes of 1814 were renewed. The duels which took place in every quarter between the French and allied officers, were carried to an alarming extent, and were principally fatal to the Prussians, between whom and the French the most deadly hatred had long since subsisted. The spirit of animosity which actuated the conduct of both parties was not to be extinguished, although the assassinations, for such they might be termed, which almost hourly took place, at length called for the exercise of the strictest vigilance on the part of the police, and the serious interposition of the several military leaders.

“While quartered in the vicinity of the French capital, I made frequent inquiries after the colonel, who had so generously preserved my life; but from all I could learn, he had perished towards the close of the engagement:—more immediate and positive information I was unable to obtain, in consequence of my recall to England to join the *dépôt* of a cavalry regiment then in India, in which my father had purchased me a troop. On reaching my hotel in Jermyn-street, I found a letter from Agatha, which had been forwarded from Montreal by my Canadian banker. The style of this communication was even more chilling than that of the last, and there were evident allusions to the propriety of a daughter sacrificing her affections to filial duty, which completely opened my eyes to the change which had taken place in her sentiments. In a paroxysm of rage, I not only tore the letter into fragments, but removing the portrait from my breast where it had hitherto remained suspended, I dashed it with violence against the walls of my apartment.

“Soon afterwards, I took leave of my family, and proceeded on board an East-Indiaman to my destination in Madras. My fellow passengers were numerous, and

consisted chiefly of officers of cavalry and infantry, going out, like myself, to join their respective corps; while the society was certainly rendered not less cheerful by the presence of a number of married and single ladies. Many of the former were embarked in order to join their husbands; and the latter, for the chief part, were now crossing the Atlantic on a matrimonial speculation. The whole, with very few exceptions, were lovely and fascinating women; yet in vain did I seek, in their lively and agreeable conversation, to forget the dereliction of Agatha. Her image was too deeply rooted in my breast, and Agatha, such as I had known her on the night of our final separation, was ever present to my recollection, acting as a talisman against the temptations by which I was assailed. This state of intense thought amounted sometimes to torture: and, satisfied that I had nothing now to hope, I yielded to the example of my companions, and sought to drown reflection in the bottle. One excess generally leads to another: again I played, for it seemed, in doing so that I revenged myself on both father and daughter, and this wild idea frequently inspired me with a feeling of sullen satisfaction.

“ On joining my regiment, I found every opportunity of feeding my newly revived passion. Horse-racing, the favourite amusement in India, was carried on to a ruinous extent in the corps, while the nights were frequently consumed at the card-table. Often, to my shame be it confessed, as the morning trumpet sounded to horse, have I risen, pale and harassed from the board at which I had seated myself the preceding evening, and weak as from the effect of intoxication, thrown myself into the saddle, where I could with difficulty preserve my equilibrium. The only society in which I found pleasure, when not engaged in this ruinous amusement, was that of my colonel and his daughter, a fine and accomplished young woman, who had recently sustained a heavy loss in the death of a tender and affectionate mother; but the habit and principle of play at length

acquired so decided an ascendancy over my mind, that every moment stolen from my now favourite occupation, seemed a tax on my happiness, and I gradually withdrew from the intimacy of their society. During my occasional visits, however, I thought I could trace on the brow of the benevolent colonel not the repelling coldness of the offended superior, but the anxious interest of the compassionating friend, and more than once I fancied I beheld a disposition to use the language of remonstrance, which was ever apparently checked by some secret recollection.

“ Nearly a year had now elapsed since my arrival in India, and I had involved myself to so large an amount, that my embarrassments ceased to be a secret, while various rumours were but too industriously conveyed to the ears of my commanding officer. Then it was, for the first time, that I was fully awakened to a due sense of the guilty weakness with which I had been cursed : for in the private conference which ensued, at his request, I found that I had again, and for ever, dashed every fairer prospect of felicity from my reach. Think, Clifford, what must have been my emotions, on discovering that although Mr. Worthington had so sternly and cruelly rejected every mark of contrition contained in my letters, he had resolved not to cast me off without a further and decisive trial. In order to ascertain whether this unhappy propensity was inherent, or merely the result of circumstances, and the peculiar position in which I had been momentarily placed, it was necessary to give me no hope, since, with such an incentive to good conduct as the ultimate possession of Agatha, it might naturally be inferred, I would not again speedily deviate into the commission of error. His dread of compromising the future happiness of his child, had compelled him, however unwillingly, to inflict this severe trial on my mind, but in that manner only could he decide in regard to the actual tendency of my inclinations and pursuits.

“ Mr. Worthington had obtained the promise of my

former commanding officer to watch over and acquaint him with the actions of one, whose projected alliance with his family sanctioned the adoption of the measure, and this, it appeared, was the subject of their conference at the moment of our departure from F—k—t. The same request had been continued to my present colonel, while the motives, under an injunction of secrecy, were sufficiently explained. With pain and anxiety, this excellent man had remarked my imprudences, and foreseen the serious evils they threatened to entail; but the word he had given, and the necessity he felt of justice being rendered to the views and intentions of Mr. Worthington, precluded all possibility of his warning me of my danger, and stepping forward to my assistance. All that he could do, was to express his decided disapprobation of gambling, to the corps; but though few of the officers sought openly to brave his opinion, many secret opportunities were found for indulging a propensity, in which, unhappily for my future hopes, I stood principally conspicuous. With a reluctant hand and heart, he had at length been compelled to convey to his friend the painful conviction of my utter devotedness to this ruinous vice, and that communication had already been, or speedily would be, transmitted to the father of Agatha.

“ I will not attempt to describe the feelings with which I listened to this recital. It was now evident that my fate was decided, and that every avenue to a reconciliation with Mr. Worthington was closed upon me for ever. In all the bitterness of despair, I cursed the vacillation and weakness of my character; and accusing the colonel of having acted the ignoble part of a spy on my actions, rushed from the apartment.

“ When soothed into something like reason by reflection, I felt the injustice of my conduct; and, resolving to call on the following morning and make the amplest and most heartfelt apology to the colonel, I once more recurred to the peculiar character of my destiny. Had I not been made acquainted with the latent pur-

pose of Mr. Worthington, I should still have enjoyed that state of comparative ease into which I had worked myself by dissipation, and a degree of thoughtlessness that had latterly become habitual to me ; but, alas ! the conviction that an opportunity had been afforded for redeeming my early errors, and the cruel consciousness that that opportunity had been allowed and lost for ever, were circumstances fraught with bitterness to my future peace. Yet the singular change in the style of Agatha's letters accorded not with the story of her father's reservation, and I vainly sought to reconcile the inconsistency.

"I was recalled from a train of deep reflections to which this communication had given rise, by the entrance of Captain W——, an officer of artillery, with a message from the colonel, and a meeting was appointed for the following morning at daybreak. Although my heart yearned to express the full measure of its regret, yet, as a meeting had been peremptorily demanded, there was no alternative, and at the first faint glimmering of light in the east, I hastened, accompanied by a friend, to a distant jungle, which had been designated as the place of rendezvous. The ground having been measured, and our stations taken, the signal was given, when the colonel's ball passed unwounding by my side, and spent its fury in the heart of the jungle, while I discharged my pistol in the air.

"Having expressed himself satisfied, I advanced with emotion, and in a manner which sufficiently testified my sincerity, expressed my unfeigned contrition for a remark which had been wrung from me in the bitterness of mental suffering. The colonel took my proffered hand, and pressed it with affectionate warmth, assuring me of his undiminished regard, and his unaffected sympathy in my loss, regretting, at the same time, that he should have been in any way instrumental in directing the blow so cruelly aimed at my happiness.

"The heavy affliction by which I was now visited was marked, not by boisterous grief, but by a confirmed

stupor, which for a time deprived me of the power of serious reflection. A new source of annoyance springing up, aroused my faculties into action. The state of my affairs had become more and more critical, and my creditors were loud in their demands for money : a circumstance which soon became known to the officers of the corps, by whom numerous hints of the necessity for immediate liquidation, were in consequence thrown out. Stung to the soul by the selfishness and injustice of those very men, who, the first to profit by my weakness, were also the first to have that weakness arraigned, I with my usual impetuosity of character, hastened to the colonel, and stating my circumstances, together with the animadversions of my brother officers, declared my intention to sell out of the regiment immediately. In vain did this excellent man endeavour to dissuade me from the adoption of a measure teeming with ruin to my future prospects in life ; and, by the generous offer of his purse, seek to preclude all positive necessity for the step. I was resolute in my purpose ; for no human consideration could have induced me to continue in a corps where the inuendoes of pretended friends had been the first to proclaim the exigencies they themselves had been instrumental in creating. A purchaser from another regiment was soon found—for I was resolved that no subaltern of my own should enjoy the fruit of my folly—and the necessary papers were soon forwarded to England for approval and execution.

“ Meanwhile I had almost wholly withdrawn myself from the society of my late companions, and again devoted myself to that of the colonel and his daughter, whose amiable attentions acted as a balm on my mind, and somewhat softened the asperity of feeling which blighted happiness on one hand, and ungenerous reprehension on the other, had so cruelly awakened. At length a confirmation of the purchase, accompanied by a draft for the amount, arrived from England ; and I had ceased to be a member of that profession for which

I originally sacrificed more lucrative if not more honourable pursuits in life. The price of my troop proved just sufficient to pay my debts, and provide me with a passage home; and after having taken an affectionate leave of the colonel, who, with his daughter, expressed the warmest regret at my departure, and a fervent hope of a future meeting in England, I left the shores of India for ever.

“The probable consequence of the step I was about to take, I had foreseen from the commencement; but acting ever from the wild impulse of feeling, it was not until too late that I could dwell with sufficient calmness on the imprudence of my decision. An exchange into another regiment would have answered all the purpose intended; and a draft on my indulgent father, accompanied by a statement of my difficulties, would, I *now* felt persuaded, have been met in such a manner as to have enabled me to liquidate the various claims against me. But thus to have sacrificed every hope of advancement in a profession in which I had already attained a respectable rank for my years, must, I could not conceal from myself, occasion much pain and disappointment to the bosom of my parent.

“Nor was I wrong in my conjecture. The serious displeasure which he expressed at our first interview, led to a misunderstanding which drove me a voluntary exile from my family. The slave of impetuous passions, my proud nature could not brook the language of reproach or condemnation, even from the author of my being; and though my heart suffered from the conviction of my hastiness and imprudence, I questioned the right of another to interfere with or arraign my actions. All that I now possessed was an income of two hundred a year, and with that sum I resolved to repair to the Continent, and consume a few years in travelling and visiting the different places most worthy of the attention of the stranger.

“Early in the year 1821, I again beheld the beautiful domes of this metropolis, but, most unfortunately for my projected tour, met with a number of my acquaint-

tance—chiefly young men accustomed to bask in the sunshine of pleasure, and eager to seize every opening to enjoyment. By these I was easily persuaded to give up the prosecution of my design for the present, and to enter into the gaiety and dissipation peculiar to the society to which they introduced me.

“Of all the temptations which the youthful imagination is assailed, perhaps there are none more forcible or better calculated to effect the downfall of resolution, prudence, and moral principle, however confirmed by habit or experience, than those pleasure-breathing assemblies known in Paris by the designation of *Salons d'Ecarté*. In these spacious rooms, furnished in the most costly manner, and covered with pier glasses, reflecting numerous lights suspended from the walls in lustres of dazzling brightness, may nightly be seen reclining on rich ottomans, or surrounding the card table, a host of beautiful women, whose moulded and uncovered shoulders, and brilliant animated eyes, acquire additional loveliness and expression from the glittering jewels which adorn their persons, and lend a style of eastern magnificence to the scene.

“To the fascination and delusion of these intoxicating assemblies, I yielded up my whole time; and night after night I continued to risk sums of money, not very great in themselves, but sufficiently so to make me feel sensible of the severe drain on my very limited income.—Cheered by the hope of eventually retrieving my losses, and consoled, in some degree, by the smiles of the syrens, who seemed to sympathize in my ill fortune, I still persevered; occasionally cheated by the *chevaliers d'industrie*, who contrive to procure admission into all these houses, but more frequently the victim of my comparative ignorance of the game, and want of judgment in the regulation of my stakes.

“Anxious to recover my money, and too much excited by the constant habit of play to deem the stakes at the *écarté* table sufficiently high, I now had recourse to the public gaming-house; and to such a height was this un-

happy propensity finally carried, that I relinquished all other society, in order to indulge more unrestrainedly in my favourite passion. My days were now consumed at Frascati's and the Palais-Royal, while my nights were devoted to Astelli, Le Pain, Magnolle, and several other lady-proprietors, equally celebrated for the splendour of their establishments and the style and beauty of the females by whom they were frequented.

"But to be brief—such a state of things could not long exist. My ready funds were now exhausted, and a large sum which I had received in advance from my banker, was also swallowed up at the gaming-table.—Those women, to whom I had often lent a few Napoleons, when fortune, the better to deceive, did occasionally deign to smile on me, were not long in discovering that my finances were fast approaching to an ebb; and their love-beaming eyes no longer met mine with tenderness of expression, but were turned towards some more happy fellow, who had not yet been completely ruined. Nor was this all. The lynx-eyed creditors, who seem no less gifted here than their fellows across the channel, with an intuitive perception of the state of a debtor's finances, were not backward in their applications; and scarcely had I got rid of my last Napoleon, when I found that urgent demands for money were pouring in from every quarter. Every one had a little bill to make up, *un petit paiement à faire*, and they were not long in being informed that I had not a *sou* to aid in the discharge of their bills. They then vowed to arrest me; nor did they vow in vain, for in a very short time I found myself immured within the walls of a country prison, where I was allowed full leisure to ruminate on my follies, and to form better resolutions for the future.

"During nearly twelve months I continued in this dreadful state of seclusion, deprived of all intercourse with my friends, who, by a rule of the prison, were debarred from entering my chamber; and as I was unwilling to associate with any of the inmates of my new

habitation, I had recourse to study to while away my time. The result of this state of isolation has, however, been highly beneficial to me, since the serious impressions to which it has given rise, have been productive of a firm resolution never on any account to subject myself to similar humiliations and inconveniences by indulging again in play.

"It was towards the close of my confinement in this place, that a *guichetier* informed me one morning that an officer of rank, who had formerly distinguished himself under Napoleon, was about to be conducted to the prison on a charge of robbery; and that as no other accommodation could be procured, he was to share my room. In the course of the evening, the prisoner arrived—but judge my distress and astonishment, when in that officer I discovered the individual who had saved my life at Waterloo. Too much absorbed in his own painful feelings, he did not notice me on his entrance, and, notwithstanding an involuntary exclamation wrung from my lips by the surprise of the moment, he did not recognize me until I had recalled the circumstance to his recollection. What a distressing situation for us both! Long and anxiously had I sought this gallant preserver of my life, burning to testify my gratitude, to tender my friendship, and to receive his in return:—now he stood before me when I least expected to see him, in the character of a felon. Was it possible, then, that the man who, covered with scars and decorations, fought so gloriously on that memorable day, hallowing valour with mercy, should have disgraced his laurels, and the rank he bore, by the commission of an act so base? Justice and humanity forbade the supposition; and the generous being to whom I was indebted for existence, stood wholly exculpated in my eyes, of even a thought of a dishonourable tendency.

"Colonel H—— appeared to be about five and fifty years of age. His person was of the middle size, and exceedingly robust. His limbs were muscular, and possessed that iron inflexibility peculiar to men who have

been nursed in hardihood, and inured to every species of privation ; while, through the half closed folds of his linen, a chest, literally covered with hair, and common to the inhabitants of southern France, proclaimed him to be of one of these provinces. His thick, dark locks, in which the gray had begun to make itself distinguishable, and bushy eyebrows, gave an air almost of ferocity to his countenance, by no means softened by the expression of his eyes, which were gray and piercing ; while a large scar from a sabre wound, by which the upper part of one of his cheeks had been indented, lent additional harshness to his warlike visage. The frequent play of his features, indicated the existence of powerful passions, and that high tone of character peculiar to one accustomed to command. His action and language were vehement ; and when feelings of a more violent nature were excited, his words were literally heaved from the bottom of his powerful chest. He had served under Napoleon almost from the commencement of his military career, and had been engaged, independently of smaller affairs, in fifty important battles. Upwards of twenty wounds had disfigured his body in various parts, and several decorations pending from his breast, had been the reward of his bravery and good conduct in the field.

“And yet this was the individual against whom the ignominious charge of an attempt at robbery had been preferred, and who now waited, with painful impatience, the convocation of that tribunal before which the merits or demerits of that accusation were to be publicly discussed. Whenever the unhappy colonel reverted to this subject, during the short period that we continued together previous to his trial, his wonted firmness of character appeared to forsake him, and tears of bitterness often chased each other down his furrowed cheeks—not tears of regret for a crime which he felt himself humbled to be compelled to disavow even to me, and of which I most religiously believe him to have been innocent ; but tears of despair that such a stigma should be attached to his character, after so long a

term of years spent in the service of a country for which he had spilt his best blood, sustaining a reputation for courage and correct conduct, which the breath of slander had not yet dared to sully.

“ He declared himself to be the victim of that spirit of persecution which had actuated the Bourbons since the restoration, in regard to all the faithful adherents of the Emperor, and solemnly protested that his only crime in their estimation was his unswerving attachment to his late master—an attachment which had frequently led him into the expression of sentiments incompatible with his own interests; but nevertheless not of a character to call down such inhuman persecution on his head. The Procureur du Roi, he was well aware, would leave no means untried, no bribery unattempted, to accomplish his disgrace; yet, relying on his innocence, he scarcely doubted of an honourable acquittal, although his horror of appearing before a public tribunal to meet a charge of this description was profound beyond expression.

“ At length arrived that important day which was to restore, to his original rank in society, the being to whom I was indebted for life, with a reputation unsullied by the cruel ordeal he was doomed to undergo, or to give his name and days to infamy and suffering for ever. At an early hour the colonel was prepared for the summons, which he momentarily expected. His features, now composed, but melancholy, evidently attested the recent action of deep mortification and wounded pride on his mind. He spoke but little, and seemed to be wholly occupied with his situation; but when the *guichetier* entered to inform him that he was sent for, he suffered a tear to escape, as he grasped my extended hand with earnestness and in silence.

“ The interval of suspense was to me painful beyond endurance; nor was it until a late hour in the evening that I was made acquainted with the result of the proceedings. Soon after the prisoner had entered the court, the act of accusation was read by the Procureur

du Roi. It charged Colonel H—— with having, on a certain night, been discovered in the act of stealing a basket containing plate, belonging to the proprietor of the hotel where he lodged, in the town of——. It further stated, that on examination this basket proved to have been filled with straw, in order to prevent the several articles from clashing together, and thereby leading to detection; and that the prisoner, when by accident met on the staircase, while in the act of carrying away the plate, had on a pair of cloth shoes, the better to effect his object. To this charge, fully detailed in its several counts, the colonel pleaded not guilty, when the Procureur du Roi called several witnesses, all of whom were individuals connected with the hotel, who swore positively to the facts, and the evidence for the prosecution here closed.

“The prisoner having been called upon for his defence, had no witness to produce, but solemnly asserted his innocence of the charge alleged, which he declared to be the fruit of a conspiracy against his honour and his life. He admitted that he had slept at the hotel on the night in question; but denied having quitted his apartment after retiring to rest. In a speech of much feeling and eloquence, he appealed to the court to decide whether it was likely that an officer who had served nearly thirty years with credit and fidelity, both in the armies of the Republic and in those of Napoleon, could really be guilty of the crime with which he stood charged. Neither were his means so limited as to induce the supposition that he had been driven by distress to the commission of an offence so heinous in its nature, he being then in the receipt of three thousand francs a year for his services and decorations. He concluded by calling on several individuals of high distinction to attest the public services he had performed, and the private estimation he had enjoyed, until the moment when this infamous accusation had been preferred; and expressing his reliance on the fair and impartial judgment of the court, submitted himself to its decision.

“ What must have been his horror and surprise, when the tribunal, pronouncing its sentence with a haste but too painfully demonstrative of its willingness and determination to condemn, decreed that the charge of an attempt at robbery having been fully proved against the prisoner, Colonel H——, a member of the Legion of Honour, he should be publicly degraded from his rank, divested of his orders, and exposed in the pillory on the following Monday in the market-place ; and that, further, he should be condemned to the hulks for the term of five years.

“ You will readily understand with what feelings of pain and disappointment I received the account of this cruel sentence from the concierge of the prison. As for the unhappy colonel, I never again beheld him. On his removal from the tribunal, he was conducted to another prison in the town, appropriated to the reception of condemned persons. Each day, until that appointed for his exposure in the pillory, I expected to receive an account of his death by his own hand, but in this I was disappointed. He was exhibited for many hours in the *carcan*, with his imputed crime detailed in large characters, and affixed to a beam of the scaffolding immediately over his head, and a few days afterwards, a chain of convicts having arrived on their route to Toulon, he was attached to the gang. Thus manacled and habited as a felon, the man who had headed a successful charge against the English troops at Waterloo, might be seen confounded with the very refuse of the human race, his once haughty eye shunning the eager gaze of the multitude, and his head bent over his chest in sorrow and in shame.

“ This occurrence took place about three weeks prior to my liberation, and during the whole of that interval, the image of this truly unfortunate man was incessantly before my eyes. There was something so cruelly romantic in the circumstances under which, after so much fruitless solicitude on my part, we had at length met, that I could scarcely persuade myself I was not under

the influence of a dream; but when I glanced at the opposite side of the apartment, which he had occupied, and beheld the designs he was wont to trace on the walls, in his moments of abstraction from that state of intense suffering in which he more usually indulged, the whole train of recent occurrences rose in succession before me, dispelling the momentary delusion, and flashing painful conviction on my mind.

"My isolated position had, in consequence of this event, been rendered almost insufferable, when the funds for which I had been so long compelled to wait, and without which my release could not possibly be effected, arrived from England. Once more, therefore, but thin, pale, and languid, from want of air and exercise, was I restored to freedom. During the twelve months that I continued to inhabit these gloomy walls, such was my aversion to coming in contact with my fellow prisoners, that I never once descended into the court of the prison; and had I been without the means of finally discharging the claims of my creditors, I might have ended my days within its limits; for, although the subjects of the country cannot be detained for a period exceeding five years, that privilege is not extended to the foreigner, who may be immured for life, in the event of his not paying every franc of the original debt and expenses, should the caprice of the creditor so determine it.

"I thank heaven, however," concluded Dormer, "that this has not been my case. Two months have now elapsed since my liberation, and I have had, even in that short interval, sufficient reason to know that the horrid vice of gaming has been effectually rooted out from my breast by the severe probation I have undergone. Need I add, my dear Clifford, that the satisfaction arising from that conviction is doubly increased this day by meeting with the friend and companion of my earlier and less eventful years—a friend to whom my experience may prove useful, and whom it shall be my care to guard against those dangers by which the young

and the generous are almost imperceptibly assailed in this voluptuous metropolis."

CHAPTER V.

THE long and interesting narrative of Dormer was scarcely ended, when the loud cracking of a postilion's whip drawing the attention of his friend to the window of the apartment which overlooked the Rue St. Honoré, he beheld his uncle's carriage in the act of entering into the court of the hotel. Apologizing hastily, he left the room, and was at the door of the vehicle in sufficient time to assist Miss Stanley in alighting; who, followed by her father, was shown to the apartment he had just quitted. Sir Edward, who had suffered considerably from his old complaint during the journey, was the next object of his attention, and several minutes were passed ere they joined their friends within.

"Dear Mr. Dormer," "my dear Miss Stanley," uttered in the most familiar tones of voice, were the first sounds which fell upon the startled ear of Delmaine, as, all astonishment, he beheld, on entering, the hand of Helen clasped in that of his friend. A pang of jealousy shot across his bosom, and, unable to account for the existence of such freedom between those whom he had previously deemed absolute strangers to each other, his eyes were turned inquiringly from one to another, while the half-curved lip and increasing paleness of his cheek, proclaimed the emotion he struggled to conceal.

Dormer was too quick-sighted, and too conversant with the passions, not to understand at once the feelings of his friend, and he hastened to undeceive him. "My dear Clifford," he at length exclaimed, "I have been doubly fortunate to-day—in Colonel and Miss Stanley

you behold the Indian friends I named to you in the course of my narrative. Colonel," he added, addressing his old commanding officer, "Delmaine and myself have met to-day for the first time since our separation in boyhood; and I have been availing myself of the privilege of the soldier-traveller, by giving him a full, true, and particular account of all the wonders I have seen, the trials I have undergone, and the few friends whose kindness and attention have compensated for—"

"I hope," interrupted the Colonel, anxious to divert him from a subject which bore evident reference to himself, and in a tone half playful, half in earnest, "that you have not forgotten an enumeration of your follies—especially that of leaving India at a moment when a majority without purchase was within your reach."

"Time and reflection have made me wiser," mournfully returned Dormer; "but, Colonel, you know I stood only third on the list of captains, therefore, how could this possibly be?"

"True," rejoined the Colonel; "but Lovell and Granby, your seniors, perished a few days after your departure; and Freeling's death, which succeeded to theirs, left the majority vacant in about a fortnight."

"Which Beauclerc, the next senior captain after me, got of course," replied Dormer; "but, my dear sir, you know that I could not resist the tide of circumstances—my debts—my difficulties—"

"Both might have been satisfactorily arranged, had your pride not intervened," returned the colonel, seriously; "that indomitable pride which would not stoop to receive a mark of friendship from one deeply interested in your welfare."

"Nay, nay, Colonel," exclaimed Dormer, in accents which proclaimed his distress at such a supposition, "it was not pride; it was—I scarcely know myself what it was; but it was not pride. Deeply, unceasingly, have I cherished the recollection of your generous offer; neither could I have hesitated to receive an obli-

gation at your hands; but the conduct of my brother officers—”

“Was not exactly what it should have been,” interrupted the other; “but forgive me, Dormer—I would not willingly recall the painful recollections of that period to your mind; yet I confess I have not patience to think of the advantages you have so needlessly thrown away; however, let us dwell no longer on that which cannot now be remedied.”

“Clifford, do you choose to introduce me to your friend?” half reproachfully exclaimed Sir Edward, who, seated in an enormous *fauteuil*, near the fire-place, had been a silent listener to the conversation, occasionally passing his right hand down his legs to soothe the violence of his gout.

“Pardon my inattention,” hastily returned our hero, who, forgetting both his friend, his uncle, and the colonel, had stood watching the countenance of Helen during this short conference, seeking in vain to discover if it bore any indication of more than common interest in the former. “Dormer, allow me to present you to my kind uncle and benefactor, Sir Edward Delmaine.”

“Humph!” muttered the good old baronet, “your friend and uncle, certainly; but as for your benefactor, I hate the term; but no matter—Mr. Dormer, I am very glad to see you. Though we have never met, we are not wholly strangers to each other; for,” nodding significantly in the direction of his nephew, “I have heard of you before.”

Dormer bowed, and Sir Edward proceeded to inquire what arrangements had been made in regard to their future residence while in Paris.

Clifford communicated the success of his morning’s ramble, and proposed conducting the colonel and Miss Stanley to the Hôtel Mirabeau, to examine the apartments he had engaged.

To this they both gladly assented; and after a slight repast had been served up, they proceeded, still in their

travelling dresses, to the Rue de la Paix, Dormer remaining behind, as a companion to Sir Edward.

The gayly-dressed, young, and somewhat loquacious *propriétaire* soon made her appearance; and, conducting the party to the apartment *au premier*, consisting of a large suite of rooms, began to expatiate on the size and convenience of the *logement*, and the richness and elegance of the furniture. The colonel appeared to be perfectly satisfied, and his daughter seemed by no means disposed to cavil at the choice made by him who had so readily undertaken the commission.

Leaving the Hôtel Mirabeau, the party again entered the Rue de la Paix, on their return to Meurice's. At a jeweller's shop, near the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, the colonel stopped for the purpose of making a purchase, leaving his daughter and Delmaine to examine some curious trinkets which lay exposed in a window.

Nearly at the same moment, two young men of highly fashionable appearance, and apparently lounging from the garden of the Tuileries, stopped at another window of the shop; and scarcely affecting to conceal their real purpose, by even an appearance of attention to the baubles before them, proceeded to comment loudly on the dress of Miss Stanley, who, it has already been remarked, had not thrown off her travelling equipments.

"*Pardieu ! Il faut avouer, milord, que vos Anglaises ne brillent pas trop en fait de toilette. Elle n'est pas mal, cependant. Dieu, quel teint !—quels yeux ; mais, aussi, quel chapeau infame !—quelle chaussure détestable !*" And raising his glass to his eye, he proceeded to a more critical examination of the person of Helen, with an air of ease and effrontery which could not be exceeded.

"*Ce sont apparemment de nouveaux arrivés, mon cher,*" drawled forth his companion, in an accent which proclaimed him English, though his dress was fashioned after the style of a Parisian exquisite.

"*Parole d'honneur,*" resumed the first speaker, still continuing his insolent examination; "*elle est vraiment jolie ; mais diable ! pourquoi cache-t-elle sa figure ?—*

Eh, voyons son cavalier ! Cela vient de la cité, n'est ce pas ?"

The blood of Clifford, which had been fast mounting since the commencement of this short dialogue, now shot like lightning through his veins, and nothing but the presence of Miss Stanley prevented his chastising the insolence of the native on the spot. A quick and irrepressible tremor passing through his frame, betrayed the excited state of his feelings to his companion, who, trembling with apprehension, pressed the arm on which she leaned with earnestness, and turned her speaking eyes on his, with an expression of intense supplication.

Unable to resist the appeal, Clifford replied with a look which quieted the fears of his charge ; but turning the instant afterwards in the direction of the intruders, his haughty glance was met by one as haughty and unshrinking as his own. His eye had fastened on that of the first speaker, who encountered his threatening gaze with a mixed expression of ferocity and scorn.—Their significant looks were unheeded by Miss Stanley, who was in the act of moving towards the shop, when the colonel joined them. They then pursued their course to Meurice's.

As they passed the spot, where the insolent loungers still continued in the same careless attitude, Delmaine and the Frenchman again exchanged glances of hostile and significant import. There was an expression of malignant exultation in the eye of the latter, which did not escape the observation of Helen. Secretly rejoicing at the forbearance manifested by our hero, whose responsive looks of defiance had passed unnoticed, she reached the hotel, under the firm impression that the affair was terminated, and that the better understanding of Delmaine had triumphed over the first natural ebullition of passion.

"What say you, Dormer, to a walk as far as Galigani's—I rather expect to find letters?" observed Clifford, on entering the apartment, where his friend had been engaged in earnest conversation with Sir Edward.

The question was accompanied by an expressive look, noticed only by Dormer, which gave him to understand that something more than a mere visit to Galignani's for letters was implied. The young men took up their hats, and left the apartment. On reaching the courtyard, Delmaine explained the nature of the occurrence which had just taken place, when, instead of proceeding towards the library, they turned into the Rue de la Paix, where our hero sought in vain for those he had so recently left standing near the jeweller's, and who, he felt satisfied, must have been aware of his intention to return.

"They are gone!" he exclaimed, with bitter impatience; "let us move on quickly—we may possibly find them on the Boulevard."

The friends soon found themselves under the tall trees which form the avenue, and pursued their course until they came nearly opposite to Tortoni's, where Dormer called the attention of his companion, who had kept his rivetted before him, to two individuals on the Boulevard des Italiens.

"There," he exclaimed, "is the self-expatriated and coxcombical Lord Hervey, and with him the Comte de Hillier, one of the fiercest desperadoes and most successful duellists in all Paris: he has already killed five men —"

"And may now kill a sixth," interrupted Delmaine, urging his friend to the opposite Boulevard, and directing his steps towards the persons pointed out by Dormer; "these are the very men I am in quest of."

They now rapidly approached, when our hero, having chosen the side nearest the comte, placed one hand on his hip, and extending his elbow, with every muscle of the arm distended to the utmost, he brushed by his enemy with a violence, rendered more irresistible, because it was totally unexpected. The swiftness of motion on one side, added to the indolence of attitude on the other, completely destroyed the equilibrium of De Hillier, who was urged several paces in advance of his

companion, and only with difficulty saved himself from falling.

Delmaine, who had previously relinquished the arm of his friend, continued his course loungingly a few yards in advance, and then, suddenly turning round, fastened his eyes on the countenance of the ferocious duellist, with an expression of profound contempt. De Hillier, in whose bosom shame, rage, mortification, and hatred, swelled with ungovernable fury, could with difficulty articulate or express his thirst for vengeance. No explanation was demanded, for in our hero they recognised the stranger between whom and the comte the most hostile glances had so recently been exchanged. The latter was aware of the provocation he had given, and he already regarded his opponent as a victim devoted to his wrath.

"Your cards, gentlemen," demanded Lord Hervey, taking one at the same time from his own richly-embossed case; "*De Hillier, votre carte, mon cher.*"

Such was the agitation of the Frenchman, that it was some time before he could succeed in producing one of those cards whose appearance under similar circumstances had so often proved fatal to those by whom they were received.

"*La voici !*" he at length exclaimed, in a deep voice, rendered hoarse by the various passions which assailed him : "*Puisse-t-elle servir aux amis de Monsieur pour un souvenir éternel du Comte de Hillier. Demain, milord,*" he continued,—"*demain, à sept heures, au Bois de Boulogne—pas un instant plus tard !*"

"*Je le veux bien,*" returned his friend, "*quoiqu'il soit un peu matin pour moi, et que j'aime passablement mon lit.* Gentlemen," he added in English, "will seven o'clock to-morrow be quite convenient to you?"

The eyes of Delmaine indicated as little desire to defer the termination of their dispute beyond the present hour, as those of De Hillier himself; but Dormer replied to the question in the affirmative.

"And the weapons?" he pursued.

"Pistols, of course," rejoined his lordship; "is this arrangement perfectly satisfactory?"

"Perfectly so," returned Dormer. "At seven then, my lord, we shall expect you at the entrance of Bois de Boulogne."

The parties now separated. Delmaine and Dormer retracing their steps to the hotel, while De Hillier and his friend retired into the Café de Paris to dine, and discuss at leisure their plans for the ensuing *rencontre*.

The commencement of the *fracas* had been witnessed by several of that idle group of young fashionables of all nations, who throng the Boulevards at a certain hour, and lounge away the few moments preceding dinner near Tortoni's and the Café de Paris. They immediately hastened to the spot, with an eagerness that evinced their surprise at so much daring on the part of the stranger; and at the moment when the haughty disputants exchanged cards, a large crowd, among whom were several elegantly dressed women, had collected around them. The fame of De Hillier as a duellist, was too well established to excite a doubt as to the result; and the fate of the young Englishman, for such they soon discovered him to be, was already anticipated. The men would have felt disposed to admire the intrepidity of our hero, in thus venturing to provoke one so universally hated and feared, for his ruffian daring and unequalled skill; but that they believed him to be ignorant of the character of the man with whom he had now embroiled himself beyond recall; and more than one dark and eloquent female eye, as it lingered on the fair proportions and ingenuous features of the stranger, betrayed an expression of mournful interest, sufficiently indicative of the result apprehended from a *rencontre* with De Hillier.

This nobleman was now in his twenty-sixth year; his person would have been accounted good, had not the natural elegance of his figure been destroyed by an offensive carelessness of carriage, strikingly expressive of insolence and disdain. His features, also, were regu-

lar, and would have been considered handsome, had it not been for the contemptuous curl which not merely played around the lip, but contracted the muscles of his face, even unto distortion of the countenance, and the fiend-like expression of his eyes, which were dull and glassy, and filled with malignant cunning. His rank and fortune had given him access to the first society in Paris; but such was the brutal ferocity of his nature, that more than one member of that society had found reason to curse the hour of his introduction, in lamenting the untimely fall of some dear friend or relative by his ruthless hand. Urged by a wanton thirst for notoriety, and priding himself on a dexterity in the use of weapons, which none of the young men around him could succeed in attaining, he often deliberately and without provocation, fastened insults on the inexperienced, which led to results almost ever fatal in their character to the latter.

At the period now alluded to, his reputation had become notorious; and although the houses of many of the more respectable families in Paris were closed against him, while in others he was received with cold and studied politeness, he still continued to keep up a certain connexion. Many of the young fashionables of the day yet adhered to him; some from fear, some from vanity, some from the notoriety attached to his name, and some from the similarity of their tastes and pursuits in the haunts of dissipation in which they were wont to meet. By far the greater number of these hated him; but wanting courage to avow their real sentiments, were content to wish his downfall in secret.

Such was the character of the individual with whom our hero was, on the following morning, to play the stake of existence; and no little anxiety was excited in the minds of many of the Parisians. The different loungers on the Boulevard, present at the moment of the quarrel, had communicated the intelligence to their friends, who, in their turn, related it to others, and that night there was scarcely a family, among the upper cir-

cles of the metropolis, in which it was not known that a duel was to be fought, on the following morning, between a handsome young Englishman and the redoubtable Comte de Hillier. Various were the opinions expressed. Some decided that the Englishman must certainly fall; others imagined, that as his countrymen were generally considered to be excellent marksmen with the pistol, De Hillier would find his equal. Some few sagaciously remarked, that the glance of the comte's eye would be sufficient to intimidate the stranger and disconcert his aim. All, however, with the exception of a few young men, whom a dread of De Hillier induced to deliver a contrary opinion, expressed their fervent wishes in favour of the Englishman.

On reaching the Rue de la Paix, Dormer quitted the arm of his friend, in order to call on a gentleman in the Hôtel de Douvres, whom he knew to be in possession of a brace of excellent pistols, and who was always happy, on such occasions, to accommodate friend or stranger, both with weapons and advice; he promised, however, to be in time for dinner, to which he had been previously invited by Sir Edward.

A few minutes after the appointed time he made his appearance in the *salon*, where the party had been some time assembled, awaiting his arrival. There was an air of hurry and fatigue about his person, which did not escape the observation of Miss Stanley; and, when she subsequently remarked the exchange of peculiar glances of intelligence between the young men, a faint suspicion of the truth flashed, for the first time, across her mind.

With a view, therefore, to ascertain whether any foundation actually existed for such apprehension, she took an opportunity, during dinner, to inquire if the king's funeral was to take place on the following day, as had been reported.

To this question Dormer, who had been more immediately addressed, replied in the affirmative, adding, that he should feel much pleasure in accompanying them

to a friend's lodgings, where he had already secured a position from which the whole of the *cortège* might be viewed to advantage.

The countenance of Helen brightened as she acknowledged the attention, and, encouraged by an approving glance from the colonel, accepted the offer of Dormer. Some reply of this nature was what she anticipated to her question, provided no engagement of the hostile character she feared, was in being. The free and unembarrassed manner of her old friend, now completely re-assured her, and she entered into conversation with a cheerfulness and spirit that delighted our hero, and caused him to lose sight of every other more serious reflection, in the contemplation of those graces of mind and person which the exhilarated tone of her feelings now so happily elicited. With him, however, she was somewhat reserved, but with Dormer she used all the freedom of an old acquaintance.

Delmaine thought he could have listened for ever to the sallies of an imagination evidently directed by sound understanding and good sense; and, much as he required repose to fit him for the trial in which he was about to engage, he heard, with regret, the colonel announce the necessity for separation, after the fatigues of their journey. Miss Stanley immediately arose and retired, and was soon followed by Sir Edward and the colonel. The friends now found themselves alone, and Dormer proceeded to communicate the result of his visit. The pistols had been promised, and would, he said, be brought to his lodgings, on the following morning, by the owner, who prized them too dearly to intrust them into the hands of a servant, or a *commissionaire*. He prepared Clifford to expect an original in this person, as far as related to the subject in question; and, having settled that they should meet at his hotel at half past five, he took his leave.

After having completed a letter intended for Sir Edward, in the event of his fall, and disposed of some other affairs, our hero was not long in consigning his

wearied senses to sleep. Before his heavy eyes were wholly closed in forgetfulness, his last thoughts had been of Helen, and the delightful though not unalloyed sensation of pleasure which he had experienced at the moment when, supplicating his forbearance with imploring eyes, she suffered her arm to linger on his own. Impressed with the images to which this recollection had given birth, his imagination prolonged the charm in his slumbers, and he was yet enjoying the delight consequent on the tender avowal of affection from her lips, when a slight tapping at the door of his apartment, suddenly awakened him from this illusory state of happiness to impressions of a less equivocal, and more serious nature.

"*Monsieur, cinque heures viennent de sonner,*" said a voice without, in a low rough key.

"*C'est bien, mon ami—laissez la lumière,*" replied Clifford, yawning, and rubbing his eyes, and but indistinctly seeing the reflection of a light through the key-hole and crevices of the door, which was immediately opposite to the foot of his bed.

The servant who had been commissioned, the previous evening, to call him at five, precisely, placed the light near the door, as directed, and groped his way down the staircase in the dark, while the heavy creaking of the banisters beneath the sturdy hands which clung to them with iron force for protection, and the occasional slipping of an unwieldy foot, falsely placed, sent their echoes throughout the death-like silence which reigned in every other part of the hotel, in a manner that threatened to destroy the further repose of its several inmates.

After yawning and stretching his arms a few minutes longer, our hero at length contrived to collect his scattered thoughts, when, jumping out of bed, and muttering something about the uncouthness of the hour appointed for the rendezvous, he proceeded to secure the lamp, which was quite indispensable, the day not yet having dawned. On looking at his watch, he found

that he had only twenty minutes left to dress and reach the lodgings of Dormer. In ten minutes his toilette was completed, and, cautiously descending the staircase, he found the porter waiting to let him out, yet evidently much surprised, and curious to know what circumstance could cause an Englishman and a stranger to issue forth at so early an hour. Ten minutes more sufficed to bring him to the Boulevard *quartier* of the Rue de Richelieu, and upon entering the apartment of his friend, he found him already dressed and awaiting his arrival.

The figure of Dormer was not, however, the only one that caught the eye of our hero. At the opposite extremity of the room, and with his back turned towards the door, a tall, stout, middle-aged personage, stood leaning over a table, on which lay scattered several portions of matter which Delmaine was unable to distinguish in the dim light of the apartment, but which, from the sound, he knew to be either steel or iron. He had now no doubt that the individual thus earnestly occupied was the professional gentleman Dormer had engaged for the occasion, and satisfied that he was preparing his surgical apparatus for an operation, if necessary, he turned to his friend, and, half jestingly, observed,

“These, indeed, are awful preparations. Do you think we shall require the instruments?”

“Require the instruments!” shouted the busy operator, erecting his tall frame as he turned suddenly round, and fastened his eyes on our hero, whose entrance he had been too much occupied to notice before; “sure, and if ye mean to fight, ye’ll require them, and the devil a better set of marking irons can the three kingdoms produce, let me tell ye.”

Delmaine, totally at a loss to understand what particular portions of the surgical apparatus were denominated “marking irons,” and not a little surprised at the unceremonious interruption of the speaker, stared at him for a moment, and then turned inquiringly towards his friend.

Dormer at once saw the error into which they had mutually fallen, and hastened to introduce them.

"Captain O'Sullivan, allow me to introduce my friend Mr. Delmaine.—Clifford, this is the gentleman to whom we are indebted for the pistols."

"Really, Captain," said our hero, smiling at his mistake, "I had quite misconceived your character and calling, having taken you for a surgeon, and the pistols for his instruments."

"What, take me, Terence O'Sullivan, for a flesh-hacking surgeon, and the best hair-triggers that a gentleman ever put his fore-finger upon, for his filthy working tools—Oh, Jasus! But come, Mr. Delmaine, as ye are to handle the weapons to-day, pray advance nearer to the light, and examine the virtues of the boys."

Our hero accordingly approached the table, when the captain, taking up a lock in one hand, and a piece of oiled flannel in the other, now recommenced the work which he had abandoned in his astonishment, carefully rubbing every part, and greasing the springs, until the free action of the pan, which he opened and shut repeatedly, satisfied him that his task was accomplished. A large mahogany case, containing all the paraphernalia of duelling, stood open upon the table. The barrels of the pistols had forsaken their wonted places, but in the several other compartments were to be seen screw-drivers, powder-flasks, flints, wipers, bullet-moulds, and bullets. Among the latter, the shining surfaces of which bore evidence of their having recently issued from the mould, Delmaine remarked one singularly ragged and uneven, blackened by fire, and evidently of a much larger size than the others. Taking it carelessly up, he advanced it to the light, and observed that it was deeply indented on one side, as if it had come in contact with a resisting bone.

"This is an unusually large bullet, Captain," he remarked, "and better fitted, I should conceive, to a musket than to a pistol. The poor fellow who received this must have had cause to remember it."

"Indeed, and he remembers it no longer," replied O'Sullivan, in a subdued tone of voice. "That same bullet gave his death-wound to as brave a lad as ever pulled a trigger, and all owing to the obstinacy of this same French count, who would not fight with the lawful weapons, but insisted on having horse pistols."

"Ah, De Hillier, too," cried Delmaine, his eyes flashing fire; "but how was this permitted—surely this must be contrary to all the rules of duelling."

"In faith it is," replied O'Sullivan; "that is in our own blessed country, but these Frenchmen can never be brought to do the thing like gentlemen. I would rather, Mr. Delmaine," he added, seriously, and utterly unconscious of any singularity in the remark, "fight twenty duels at home, than have the bother of one in this country. With us, do ye see, it is but to exchange cards, and meet quietly, and the thing is soon settled; but a foreigner throws every obstacle in your way, and tries to have all the advantage on his own side. For my own part, now I know them, I try to avoid them, and not to quarrel with them more than I can help."

"Was the gentleman who fell considered a good marksman?" demanded our hero, musingly.

"As good as ever pointed a muzzle of Joe Manton's," replied the captain proudly. "No man but myself could so easily hit a shilling, as he did with these same playthings, Mr. Delmaine. But the boy was hot, and would fight the blustering count, who had insulted him, even on his own terms. Yet his frame was delicate; and though his hand and eye were steady, the lock of his pistol was like that of a musket, and the trigger so stiff, that he missed his adversary, and was shot himself. That bullet, sir, I keep as a proof of the disgraceful advantages taken by foreigners in their duels. Had I not been absent at the time when it was discharged, it would not now be there disfiguring that pretty shining heap, and poor Harry would yet have been alive."

"Poor Harry, indeed," observed our hero. "I had heard much of the affair in which Wilmot lost his life, but,

until this moment, never knew positively by whose hand he perished."

"What, sir," vociferated the captain, throwing down the last screw which had been submitted to the action of his oiled flannel, while his eyes were turned on Delmaine, in stupid astonishment—"did you happen to know Harry Wilmot?"

"I ought to have known him," replied Delmaine, incapable of repressing a smile at the earnest attitude and manner of his interrogator—"Wilmot was my cousin."

"Your cousin!" exclaimed O'Sullivan, with increased surprise—"Oh, by the powers, then give me your hand, for let me tell ye, Mr. Delmaine, that ye are cousin to as brave a lad as ever presented his side to be shot at, at twelve paces, and great shame will it be to ye to suffer this same braggadocio of a count, who has already killed one cousin, to kill the other also. Pray, have ye ever been in training, Mr. Delmaine?"

"Training," echoed Clifford, "I know not what you mean, captain."

"Have ye ever practised much with the barkers?" continued O'Sullivan, glancing his eye at the pistols, which now lay highly polished and ready for use in their proper compartments.

The glance was sufficient to explain his meaning. and Delmaine replied, much to O'Sullivan's disappointment, that he had not discharged a pistol more than a dozen times in the course of his existence.

"Oh, Jasus!" muttered the Irishman, shrugging up his shoulders, and turning up his eye-balls with an expression of almost contempt for our hero's ignorance on so important a point. "Why, sir, Harry Wilmot practised so long that he could almost hit a shilling with his eyes shut."

Delmaine felt somewhat disposed to be angry at the contemptuous manner in which the captain drew his comparison between himself and cousin; but a look from Dormer checked his rising bile, and he replied, though in the sharp tone of one evidently piqued at an implied

inferiority, "Although I may not be sufficiently expert to hit a shilling with my eyes shut, Captain O'Sullivan, I trust I may possess coolness and skill enough to hit a man with them open."

"Sure now, Mr. Delmaine," rejoined the captain, extending his hand, and in a voice which he intended should be conciliating, "ye are not offended with me. I was only afraid, do ye see, that as ye know but little of the management of the weapons, ye would miss the Frenchman; and instead of making him pay off old scores, for the death of Harry Wilmot, have your own life to answer for in the bargain. But that last speech of yours has reason in it, and I do believe, after all, that a cool head with a steady hand, may do much with these little jewels, especially as a man is not a shilling. Now then," he continued, taking out his watch, "we have just half an hour to spare for our preparations."

"Preparations!" echoed Delmaine, "what further preparations can be necessary, Captain?"

"Oh, I perceive," said the other, "that ye are as yet but a novice in these affairs. Surely, Mr. Delmaine," glancing at Clifford's morning dress, "ye are not going to fight in those things?"

"And why not?" replied our hero, who now began to think his new acquaintance was even something more than eccentric.

"Why, sir," resumed O'Sullivan, "who ever heard of a gentleman fighting in that garb! Black silk pantaloons and stockings, black coat buttoned up to the throat, black silk handkerchief round the neck—not a speck of white to be seen—this, sir, is the real duelling dress: but a blue coat with metal buttons, and a pair of trowsers of such dimensions—oh monstrous!—and against such a marksman as De Hillier, too—why, sir, every button in your coat would be a bull's-eye for him, and he must be a bungler, indeed, who would miss your legs with such a quantity of cloth to conduct his pistol. The dead black, sir, is the thing—it disconcerts the aim, and diminishes the object to the eye, while the silk pan-

taloon often turns aside the ball, and saves a man from being a cripple for life."

"All this may be very well for a professed duellist, captain," returned Delmaine, smiling, "but you may rest assured, that whatever advantages the metal button and loose trowsers may give my adversary over me, I shall make no alteration in my dress for this occasion—nay, were I so disposed, I could not now possibly find time to effect it."

O'Sullivan stared, with the air of a man who knows not whether he may credit the evidence of his senses.—It was the first time, during the course of his long practice, that his opinion on such subjects had ever been disputed; and as it had always been his pride and delight to be considered as an adviser in affairs of honour, from whose decision there could be no appeal, his mortification in the present instance was extreme. His first impression was to turn away with disdain, from one whom he considered so ignorant and yet so obstinate; but the recollection that Delmaine was the cousin of the youth, whose untimely fate he had so much lamented, operated as a check on his growing resentment. With that sort of pity, therefore, which a man may be supposed to entertain for one whose good or ill success in a particular pursuit he fancies rests wholly with himself, and who, if abandoned by him, must be exposed to a fate the most disastrous, he coolly observed—

"Well, Mr. Delmaine, just as ye please about the dress; but mark me, Terence O'Sullivan, if ye do not live to repent it. And now, sir, while I go through the manœuvres, and show ye how to raise the pistols with effect, will ye be just kind enough to throw off your coat, pull up your shirt sleeve, and steep your arm in that pail of water, which ye see standing there." Then taking up a pistol, and assuming the attitude usually adopted in affairs of the kind, he placed his right side full to the front, and stretching himself to his utmost height,

"Look ye here, sir," he observed, glancing for a moment at his feet, "this is the true position : the heels touching each other, the toes turned outwards;" then once more erecting his frame and fastening his eye on a pair of gloves that lay on a *secrétaire* at the further extremity of the room, "We will suppose that object to be the vital part of a man's body; let the eye be fixed on it, and as you raise the pistol in a straight line from the hip to its proper level, it will follow the direction of your gaze as naturally as the needle follows the magnet. The arm should be free, and the nerves well braced, without too much hurry in the action. But," he continued, observing that our hero had not attended to his last instructions, "I see, Mr. Delmaine, ye are not using the pail of water."

"And with what view is it to be used, captain?" inquired Clifford.

"With what view, sir!" echoed O'Sullivan, unable to conceal his impatience at being questioned on such a subject—"why, that the nerves and sinews of the arm may be strengthened, and your aim consequently prove less uncertain. When that is done, sir, a glass of good old cogniac will warm your heart, and then we shall take our departure."

"Excuse me, Captain O'Sullivan," returned our hero, with warmth. "I am extremely obliged to you for the advice you have been kind enough to offer, but Mr. Dormer is my friend on this occasion; and as I neither require cogniac to warm my heart, nor cold water to brace my nerves, I beg leave to decline using either."

The countenance of O'Sullivan fell, from an expression of conscious superiority, to one of bitter humiliation and disappointment, and there was an evident and powerful effort to suppress the outbreking of his indignant feelings. This, however, lasted but for a moment, and he deigned not to reply. Taking up his hat, and moving with a dignity of manner of which neither of the friends could have believed him capable, he observed to Dormer—

"Mr. Dormer, as I find that my presence on this occasion is not required, I shall beg leave to withdraw: you will find the guards quite in readiness, and I hope," (with a half-aside and sneering glance,) "that the gentleman will know how to use them. I wish you a good morning." Then, after having noticed Delmaine by a cool and studied inclination of the head, he moved towards the door before Dormer could find time to ring the bell.

The offended consequence of O'Sullivan could not, however, prevail over the affection he bore to those weapons, which he now left in the hands of men whom he conceived to be utterly inexperienced in their management. He had scarcely put his hand on the lock of the door, when, a sudden thought occurring to him, he turned again and remarked, "Mr. Dormer, as you are now, perhaps, aware, that in the event of either of the parties being killed," his head almost instinctively nodded in the direction of Delmaine, as if he anticipated no other result in regard to our hero, "the weapons, if found, are forfeited to the laws: I wish you would be kind enough to have them taken care of, and forwarded to my hotel."

Dormer replied in the affirmative, and commenced an entreaty to O'Sullivan to remain and accompany them, when another formal "I wish you good morning, sir," cut him short in his address, and the captain quitted his apartment.

Dormer had been a silent listener to the conversation, and although apprehensive of the peculiar notions of O'Sullivan on this his first trial, would not meet with the approval of the law, he was by no means prepared to dissent from the sentiment and purpose to which he was alluding. He knew that the captain was a man of high principles, of character, and of high abilities, and that the rules to be observed in the management of his experience would be thrown in the way of the law.

by De Hillier, whose disposition to avail himself of all possible advantages was notorious. He also knew that O'Sullivan, when not engaged in the discussion of a theory which was literally his hobby, was at least a good-natured and unassuming man, and he felt pained at the recollection of wounded pride so forcibly depicted on his countenance at his departure.

"Really, Delmaine," he exclaimed, somewhat severely, when the receding footsteps of the captain announced that he was out of hearing, "you are wrong; O'Sullivan had your good alone in view, in the proposal he made, and your manner has deeply offended him."

"Pish! nonsense!" replied the other in the same tone, secretly vexed with himself for having wounded the self-consequence of the captain, yet unwilling to admit his error. "The man is a perfect bore, with his duelling dresses, and his cogniac, and his pails of water; does he take us for cowards, that he imagines our nerves require to be strengthened with cold water, and our hearts with brandy? You should not have asked him here."

The reply of Dormer was prevented by the entrance of a *valet de place*, who came to say, that the carriage which was to convey them to the wood, was in waiting. In an instant the friends, recalled to a proper sense of the unfitness of the moment for warm discussion, manifested by the change of their countenances the sincere contrition which they felt, and their hands were again extended in amity. It now wanted but twenty minutes to the appointed time, when placing the pistol-case under his arm, Dormer, preceded by our hero, descended to the court, where the carriage being drawn up, they stepped in and proceeded to the Rue de le Paix, for the purpose of taking up their medical friend, and thence with all rapidity to the Bois de Boulogne.

CHAPTER VII.

WHOEVER has taken up these volumes with the expectation of meeting with a detail of more than ordinary incidents, or discovering more than ordinary perfection in the leading characters, will be disappointed. We pretend not to enter the lists with those who have the happy art of divesting their heroes and heroines of all the weaknesses common to human nature, and clothing them in such brilliancy of wisdom and virtue as to render it a task of difficulty to determine whether they should belong to earth or heaven. The characters in our story are such as are to be met with every day, and we are inclined to hope that we shall not be utterly unsuccessful in our attempt to render them natural, since many of the events are furnished by our own experience. Many a Delmaine, and many a Dormer, has figured on the various scenes of the French metropolis, and there are probably few young Englishmen gifted with rank or fortune, or both, who may not recognise some features in the picture here imperfectly portrayed, which will admit of application to themselves. Founded principally on facts, this story may in some measure be accounted personal, yet we are aware that we cannot do harm, since self-love will prevent most people from identifying themselves with the satirized; while of course it must be a matter of absolute indifference to us, who or how many deem themselves the favoured beings intended to be represented by the less objectionable personages. If the exposition of hidden danger can possibly produce that effect which it is the almost exclusive province of experience to compass, we may at least derive satisfaction from the conviction that a salutary lesson has not vainly been afforded by us to the young and the inex-

perienced, the tendency of which will be to prevent the latent germs of evil from ripening into premature fulness by too close an approximation to these hot-beds of vice and immorality.

The character of Delmaine, as partially developed in the preceding chapter, was not certainly of the most conciliatory or convenient order, yet his disposition was kind, and his heart glowed with the most generous of human feelings. Endowed with a susceptibility which rendered him unable to endure even the shadow of slight or insult, he was equally incapable of conveying intentional offence to another; and the very sensitiveness of feeling for which he was remarkable, was in itself a certain pledge of the delicacy he observed in regard to others. Implacable, however, to a certain extent, in his resentments, he never easily forgave a wanton and premeditated attack on his feelings. Any attempt to injure him in a worldly sense, he could have overlooked; and, however necessary he might deem it to resent a personal violence, such an offence was, in his view, of an inferior description, and could be pardoned as soon as expiated; but an unprovoked and studied attack on his pride was what neither the strength of his reason nor the generosity of his nature could induce him to forget.

It was this feeling, not less than his growing regard for Miss Stanley, that had aroused the more tempestuous passions of his soul, when the insulting De Hillier so sneeringly demanded of his friend, whether he was not from "*la cité*." The dry manner of O'Sullivan subsequently, when alluding to his ignorance in the noble art of wielding a pistol, had also piqued him exceedingly; for although he knew that in this as well as in many other equally unimportant points, he had no experience, that besetting sin, his pride, rendered him incapable of enduring that his ignorance should be noticed or commented on, even by those whose opinions he must have held in the greatest contempt. In short, it was that species of ambition which, in leading him to feel desirous of being considered as excelling in all that

he undertook, without, however, taking the pains to arrive at that excellence, that tended to confirm our hero in his peculiar susceptibility to the opinions and observations of others.

Yet though governed by those wild and contradictory feelings which would not have rendered him slow to raise his arm against those by whom he often erroneously fancied slight or insult was offered, the heart of Delmaine glowed with the kindest impulses towards those whom intimacy had taught to appreciate his character, and to enter into his feelings; confiding, where he suffered himself to be attached, the very few friendships he had formed were of an enthusiastic description. At his first entrance into life, he had carried with him, as many young men of his ardent character usually do, a fund of love and good feeling towards his fellow men; but, although now only in his twenty-fourth year, his partial intercourse with the world had been of a nature to convince him that he had always pictured society as being not what it is, but what he wished it should be.

Gay and grave in turn, his impressions took their colouring from the tone of his feelings at the moment, and to these, just or erroneous, he adhered with singular pertinacity. His support or concession of any particular points of discussion, depended wholly on his caprice. With those he liked he ever waived his own opinions, and with a facility, which had its origin in real amiability of character, said "yes," or "no," as he thought that "yes," or "no," would be most favourably received. On the contrary, with those he disliked, or for whom he felt indifference, he maintained his opinions with a warmth sometimes amounting to obstinacy; nor could any arguments of his adversary, however they might convince, induce him to abandon his position. Other peculiarities, and those of a nature almost inseparable from such a character, while sufficient in themselves to cast a shade over the brightest qualities, were also his. These will be developed in the course of our narrative; let it suffice for the present to

pon, but too faithfully aimed, had encountered the metal button, and, glancing obliquely off, had torn away several inches of the waistband, through which it finally disappeared.

Several of the friends of De Hillier, who had been impatiently lingering at a short distance, awaiting the result, now advanced to the scene of combat. Their surprise and disappointment, however, were extreme, when glancing from the bleeding and recumbent form of the count, they beheld our hero apparently unhurt and unmoved, amid the small circle of his friends. Among the number of these persons was an officer of the French guards, an Irishman by birth, but long since expatriated and devoted to the service of France. The form of this individual was colossal, and bore a striking resemblance to the statues of Hercules; which graced the promenades in which he was daily wont to exhibit his own powerful proportions. The head was large, the eye and features dull and heavy, while the short curling hair, descending low into the neck, was of unusual thickness and shortness; the chest was broad and full, the limbs brawny and muscular, and the large knees, inclining inwards, gave indication of extreme strength, at the expense of those graces which characterize the proportions of the Apollo Belvidere. This individual was likewise a sort of bully, who had contrived to keep many of the humbler spirits in awe by his bold and swaggering manner, and his professed readiness to drink the blood of his enemies, even as Polyphemus once drank that of the companions of Ulysses. Considering this an excellent opportunity to produce an effect, he now called out, in a language, which in words was English, but utterly French in tone and in accent,

“Gentlemen, I wish to know whether this duel has been fair and honourable?”

The voice was instantly recognised by O'Sullivan, who stood with his back towards the speaker at the moment. Turning suddenly round, and fixing his eyes on

pulled the check-string, and arrested the attention of the driver.

Soon afterwards the cabriolet stopped, and the parties alighted, directing their course towards a secluded part of the wood. Clifford and Dormer, accompanied by the surgeon, followed at some little distance, when, on entering a small vista, surrounded by underwood, and peculiarly adapted to the purpose, De Hillier and his friend suddenly came to a stand.

Leaving his party in the rear, Dormer now advanced, in order to settle the preliminaries with his lordship, who had no little difficulty in persuading De Hillier to be guided wholly by his counsel. With much bravado and gesticulation, he insisted either that one pistol only should be loaded, and that they should toss up for the choice, or that they should be placed at twenty-five paces, and advance upon each other, reserving their fire until they had approached within a few feet. Lord Hervey remained firm in his determination to settle the affair in the usual manner, threatening to decline all interference in his behalf, unless the matter should be left entirely to his own direction. After some difficulty, De Hillier at length assented, and twelve paces having been measured, he threw off his coat, waistcoat, hat, &c. and took his station on the ground. Summoned by his friend, Delmaine now advanced, and placed himself at the opposite extremity, while the seconds proceeded to load the pistols in the presence of each other.

The signal agreed upon was three claps of the hand: at the first, the parties were to be in readiness; at the second, to raise their pistols; and at the third, to fire.

The weapons were now handed by the respective seconds to the combatants, and Lord Hervey, to whom the lot had fallen, was about to give the signal, when De Hillier, suddenly insisted that his adversary should strip himself as he had done. "Look," he exclaimed, with an air of bombast, opening his shirt, and laying bare his chest, "I carry no armour upon me. Prove that you have none, in the same manner."

His lordship, evidently mortified at the conduct of his friend, now remarked to Dormer, that it was customary in France, in affairs of honour, to adopt the course pursued by the comte.

Dormer knew that it was, and looked at Delmaine, when the latter, putting down his pistol, proceeded with a coolness and self-possession which disconcerted his antagonist, whose object it was to excite him, and consequently render his aim less certain, to divest himself of the same articles of dress which the other had abandoned.

"*Monsieur, est il satisfait ?*" he demanded, with a contemptuous sneer, that caused De Hillier to tremble with rage; then taking up the weapon, and resuming his position, he once more awaited the movement of his lordship.

The eyes of the combatants were bent upon each other at the first signal, with a steadiness and quickness which made Dormer shudder for the result; at the second, their hands were slowly and deliberately raised, until they came upon a line with their eyes; while the third was almost lost in the single report of the two pistols. In the next instant De Hillier was seen staggering backwards, while the blood which issued from a wound in the right breast, poured down the folds of his linen, and trickled to the earth. Delmaine also had dropped his pistol, and was in the act of pressing his right side, with his hands closely compressed together, and the seconds of both remained for a moment irresolute, as if dreading to learn the full extent of the mischief.

"*Dieu, il est mort !*" "Faith he has shot him ! But my pistol ! Oh, Jasus, it is on the ground," burst at the same moment from two different quarters of the wood; and in the next instant O'Sullivan, accompanied by another gentleman, rushed towards Delmaine, while a French surgeon, and one or two of his most intimate friends, advanced to the assistance of De Hillier.

"Are you much hurt, Mr. Delmaine?" earnestly in-

quired the captain, having previously ascertained that his pistol had sustained no injury in its fall. It was evident, from the tone in which this question was asked, that our hero had risen more rapidly in his estimation than quicksilver in the dog-days, and he pursued, "Oh, sure and ye are, for see," turning to the person by whom he was accompanied, "what a rent there is in the waistband, and observe how this metal button has been indented by the ball."

Delmaine, however, heard him not ; for, though suffering much from pain himself, his attention was rivetted on his adversary, whom he could not, without emotion, behold weltering in his blood, and possibly wounded beyond recovery.

"Is he dangerously hurt?" he inquired of Dormer, who had advanced to ascertain the nature of his injury.

"I will see," replied his friend, and he hastened to the spot, where a very skilful surgeon was examining the wound of the comte, whose pale cheek, and heavy eye, betrayed less of suffering, than rage and shame at the success of his opponent, at whom he occasionally glanced with all the ferocity of expression he could yet command.

In a few minutes Dormer returned, and announced, that though the ball had entered some inches into the side, the surgeon had declared the wound not to be mortal. Satisfied with this assurance, Delmaine soon lost sight of the concern he had for a moment taken in the situation of his adversary, and suffered his own medical attendant to officiate. Much to the surprise and pleasure of his friends, it was found on loosening the waistband, and removing the shirt, that the ball had not penetrated, although a large black mark sufficiently attested the severity of the contusion. So acute was the pain occasioned by the blow, that Delmaine had supposed the hip bone to have been broken, and the numbing sensation produced by it had compelled him to drop his pistol at the moment of its discharge. On examination, it appeared that the bullet from De Hillier's wea-

pon, but too faithfully aimed, had encountered the metal button, and, glancing obliquely off, had torn away several inches of the waistband, through which it finally disappeared.

Several of the friends of De Hillier, who had been impatiently lingering at a short distance, awaiting the result, now advanced to the scene of combat. Their surprise and disappointment, however, were extreme, when glancing from the bleeding and recumbent form of the count, they beheld our hero apparently unhurt and unmoved, amid the small circle of his friends. Among the number of these persons was an officer of the French guards, an Irishman by birth, but long since expatriated and devoted to the service of France. The form of this individual was colossal, and bore a striking resemblance to the statues of Hercules, which graced the promenades in which he was daily wont to exhibit his own powerful proportions. The head was large, the eye and features dull and heavy, while the short curling hair, descending low into the neck, was of unusual thickness and shortness; the chest was broad and full, the limbs brawny and muscular, and the large knees, inclining inwards, gave indication of extreme strength, at the expense of those graces which characterize the proportions of the Apollo Belvidere. This individual was likewise a sort of bully, who had contrived to keep many of the humbler spirits in awe by his bold and swaggering manner, and his professed readiness to drink the blood of his enemies, even as Polyphemus once drank that of the companions of Ulysses. Considering this an excellent opportunity to produce an effect, he now called out, in a language, which in words was English, but utterly French in tone and in accent,

“Gentlemen, I wish to know whether this duel has been fair and honourable?”

The voice was instantly recognised by O’Sullivan, who stood with his back towards the speaker at the moment. Turning suddenly round, and fixing his eyes on

the gigantic mass by whom the question had been vociferated, he coolly observed :

“Faith, and is it you, Mr. De Warner, who wish to know if the duel has been fair? Here am I, Captain Terence O’Sullivan, of His Britannic Majesty’s—— regiment, ready to support it, if ye are inclined to think otherwise.”

The bushy and overhanging brows of Mr. De Warner were soon restored to their natural position on the short thick forehead, which a perpetual habit of frowning had covered with innumerable wrinkles, and he now made a painful effort to throw something like a smile into his ungainly features, as he replied, in a much less hostile tone,

“Ah, captain; I did not know that you were present; but now I am perfectly satisfied that every thing is correct.”

“I am happy to find that you are satisfied,” drawled forth O’Sullivan, sneeringly.

The fact was, that the captain knew De Warner, rather better than that individual could have wished.—During a recent visit to his native country, he had dined at a large public party, of which the captain made one, and refusing to drink the king’s health, had been turned out of the room by an intimate friend of O’Sullivan, of whom, however, he had not once thought proper to demand satisfaction, but had contented himself with quitting Dublin for France on the following morning.

Had it not been for the opportune presence of O’Sullivan at this moment, in all probability the interruption would have led to serious results between the friends of the combatants. As it was, all further discussion now dropped, and, De Hillier having been assisted into his carriage, which was in waiting, Delmaine, Dormer, the doctor, and O’Sullivan, proceeded to their own, the latter in high spirits, and evidently delighted at the reputation likely to be conferred on his Mantons, by the termination of this dispute.

“I give you joy, Mr. Delmaine,” he exclaimed, as

soon as they were seated, forgetting all former pique in his unqualified admiration of the coolness and dexterity of our hero; "and thank yourself you may, that you did not follow my advice on this occasion, since, but for that same metal button, ye would now have an ounce of lead in your body; yet, sir, after all, this is but an accident, and the tight silk pantaloons would have turned the ball as readily as the button did."

It is impossible to say how far the captain would have pursued the chain of this his favourite theory, had he not been interrupted by Delmaine, who, extending his hand, and apologizing for the warmth he had previously evinced, inquired by what accident he had been induced to follow them, when, after what had occurred, he must have entertained so little interest in the result.

Had O'Sullivan been quite candid in his reply, he would have confessed two principal motives in addition to that he now assigned. In the first instance, he had been urged by that sort of instinctive curiosity, which is peculiar to duellists on all occasions of this description; and in the second, the strong affection which he bore towards his beautiful "marking irons," in rendering him doubtful and anxious in regard to their final appropriation, had whispered to him the policy of his being near the spot to secure them after Delmaine's fall, for of such a result he did not entertain the shadow of a doubt.—Concealed in the wood to which he had cautiously followed the parties, accompanied by the friend already mentioned, he had an opportunity of watching the several movements of the combatants, without the least risk of discovery. The credit of his pistols he now felt to be utterly at stake, as the reply to the question, which he supposed would be in every one's mouth, "With whose weapons did he fight?" must be "O'Sullivan's," of course. This was a matter of no trifling importance to the captain, who, it must be confessed, repaired to the scene of action with feelings less interested in the fate of our hero, than in the reputation of the Mantons he was about to use, which must be praised or condemned even

were wont to confine his trowsers to their proper position over the boot, had been disregarded. The breakfast table bore every symptom of an unusually copious *déjeuner à la fourchette*; and near the fire-place, where Sir Edward sat in thoughtful silence, several covered dishes were carefully arranged. The appearance of Delmaine and his friend caused a complete revolution in the air and movements of the little party. The colonel, who had been pacing the room with a clouded brow and folded arms, now suddenly stopped, and examining our hero from head to foot, at a single glance, suffered a gleam of satisfaction to animate his features. Miss Stanley, who the instant before had been sitting at the breakfast table, with a face nearly as white as the dress she wore, and apparently deeply engaged in a work which proved to be "*Les Lettres de Pascal*," suddenly threw down the book, from the perusal of which she had, no doubt, derived much information, although she never could, at a subsequent period, recollect of what nature. Rising rather awkwardly, while a flush of pleasure passed rapidly over her countenance, she now overturned and broke one or two of Monsieur Meurice's very handsome Sévres coffee-cups. Sir Edward, too, aroused from his reverie, made a movement to gain an upright position, but his gouty foot coming unfortunately in contact with one of the before-mentioned dishes, scattering its contents into the fire-place, the violence of the pain compelled him to resume his seat.

The simple mother, who beholds her wayward child incurring the hazard of destruction, either beneath the wheels of a carriage, or on the brink of a precipice, becomes, for a moment, nearly frantic with the excess of her fear, and the instinctive fondness of her nature is increased tenfold. No sooner, however, is the danger passed, than, as if to indemnify herself for the anguish she has been compelled to endure, she mercilessly punishes that child over which an instant before she was prepared to shed tears of bitterness, in all the heart-rend-

inment to his bed will do him much good, and he will know in future what it is to insult a gentleman of the United Kingdom. 'This little jewel,' he concluded, in an under tone, "has done its duty, and from this day it shall be called the 'Count,' in contradistinction to its fellow."

We know not how far, or how long, O'Sullivan would have pursued this new train of reflection, had he not been interrupted by the surgeon exclaiming, "Here we are at length." The party were now turning from the Rue de Rivoli into the Rue Castiglione, when Delmaine proposed to Dormer, that as he had quite recovered the effect of the contusion, they should alight and walk to Meurice's, in order to prevent any suspicion being entertained by their appearing at the hotel in a carriage at that early hour of the morning. This plan was adopted, and, leaving O'Sullivan and the surgeon to continue their way home, the friends once more repaired to the Rue St. Honoré.

On entering the breakfast room, they were not a little surprised to find the whole party assembled, and with an expression of anxiety upon their countenances. The state of their toilette, moreover, announced some unusual degree of haste. A loose morning dress slightly enveloped the form of Miss Stanley, while her full dark hair was but imperfectly confined by a cap, which, not having been disposed according to the strict rules of female art on these occasions, disclosed a more than ordinary quantity of luxuriant curls. Sir Edward also had, contrary to his usual custom, forgotten the operation of shaving; and the absence of the voluminous bandages which invariably encircled his gouty leg, was an evidence that some mental suffering had entirely superseded or rendered him insensible to the influence of physical pain. The colonel alone, true to his military habits, appeared dressed for the morning; but even he had not, on this occasion, observed his usual *propreté*. The knot of his black silk cravat was more negligently tied, and, for the first time, perhaps, for the last twenty years, the straps which

were wont to confine his trowsers to their proper position over the boot, had been disregarded. The breakfast table bore every symptom of an unusually copious *déjeuner à la fourchette*; and near the fire-place, where Sir Edward sat in thoughtful silence, several covered dishes were carefully arranged. The appearance of Delmaine and his friend caused a complete revolution in the air and movements of the little party. The colonel, who had been pacing the room with a clouded brow and folded arms, now suddenly stopped, and examining our hero from head to foot, at a single glance, suffered a gleam of satisfaction to animate his features. Miss Stanley, who the instant before had been sitting at the breakfast table, with a face nearly as white as the dress she wore, and apparently deeply engaged in a work which proved to be "*Les Lettres de Pascal*," suddenly threw down the book, from the perusal of which she had, no doubt, derived much information, although she never could, at a subsequent period, recollect of what nature. Rising rather awkwardly, while a flush of pleasure passed rapidly over her countenance, she now overturned and broke one or two of Monsieur Meurice's very handsome Sévres coffee-cups. Sir Edward, too, aroused from his reverie, made a movement to gain an upright position, but his gouty foot coming unfortunately in contact with one of the before-mentioned dishes, scattering its contents into the fire-place, the violence of the pain compelled him to resume his seat.

The simple mother, who beholds her wayward child incurring the hazard of destruction, either beneath the wheels of a carriage, or on the brink of a precipice, becomes, for a moment, nearly frantic with the excess of her fear, and the instinctive fondness of her nature is increased tenfold. No sooner, however, is the danger passed, than, as if to indemnify herself for the anguish she has been compelled to endure, she mercilessly punishes that child over which an instant before she was prepared to shed tears of bitterness, in all the heart-rend-

perienced, the tendency of which will be to prevent the latent germs of evil from ripening into premature fulness by too close an approximation to these hot-beds of vice and immorality.

The character of Delmaine, as partially developed in the preceding chapter, was not certainly of the most conciliatory or convenient order, yet his disposition was kind, and his heart glowed with the most generous of human feelings. Endowed with a susceptibility which rendered him unable to endure even the shadow of slight or insult, he was equally incapable of conveying intentional offence to another; and the very sensitiveness of feeling for which he was remarkable, was in itself a certain pledge of the delicacy he observed in regard to others. Implacable, however, to a certain extent, in his resentments, he never easily forgave a wanton and premeditated attack on his feelings. Any attempt to injure him in a worldly sense, he could have overlooked; and, however necessary he might deem it to resent a personal violence, such an offence was, in his view, of an inferior description, and could be pardoned as soon as expiated; but an unprovoked and studied attack on his pride was what neither the strength of his reason nor the generosity of his nature could induce him to forget.

It was this feeling, not less than his growing regard for Miss Stanley, that had aroused the more tempestuous passions of his soul, when the insulting De Hillier so sneeringly demanded of his friend, whether he was not from "*la cité*." The dry manner of O'Sullivan subsequently, when alluding to his ignorance in the noble art of wielding a pistol, had also piqued him exceedingly; for although he knew that in this as well as in many other equally unimportant points, he had no experience, that besetting sin, his pride, rendered him incapable of enduring that his ignorance should be noticed or commented on, even by those whose opinions he must have held in the greatest contempt. In short, it was that species of ambition which, in leading him to feel desirous of being considered as excelling in all that

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to himself? Had even a spark of doubt lingered in his mind, it would have been dissipated by the sight of one object in that apartment. Helen Stanley, who presided at the breakfast table, was now busied in pouring out the tea, an occupation in which she succeeded tolerably well, until the moment when her father alluded to his claim on their lasting gratitude; then indeed her hand trembled violently, and notwithstanding all her efforts to confine it to its proper direction, the smoking liquid shared its favours equally between cups and saucers. Raising her dark eyes for an instant, while an expression of the most feminine softness lingered on her features, they encountered those of our hero, and were as speedily lowered beneath his gaze. The heart of Delmaine swelled with a thousand new and various emotions; and if he had not honesty enough to confess the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, in regard to this affair, it was because he wanted courage to forego his claims, however umerited, to that favour which he believed to be the result of his supposed exclusive interest in her behalf.

As he could not therefore conscientiously assume all the credit to himself which his friends were inclined to award, he resolved at least to say nothing which could have a tendency to weaken the existing impressions; and indeed it must be admitted, that he now seriously wished that no feeling of a personal nature had been mixed up with the resolution he had adopted, from the first moment, to chastise the insolent Frenchman. Under all circumstances of the case, he felt himself justified in replying, though somewhat equivocally,

"I shall ever feel the sincerest gratification, Colonel, in the possession of your friendship and esteem; but as for gratitude, it is entirely out of the question in the present instance. I only did that which any other gentleman would have done under similar provocation."

The party now drew near the breakfast table, where our hero, having regained a little confidence, and no longer reading any very great marks of displeasure on

the brow of Sir Edward, was not slow in following the example of his friend, who, by his frequent appeals to the *rognons au vin de champagne*, *filets sautés*, and several other equally succulent dishes, gave sufficient evidence of the sharpness of appetite which may be acquired in the course of a Bois de Boulogne airing at seven in the morning.

Had an indifferent person been allowed an opportunity of observing our hero during the succeeding part of the morning, he would have found no little difficulty in identifying the gay and animated being before him with the individual who, a few hours previously, had raised his arm in all the deliberation of deadly hostility against his fellow man. Scarcely would he have believed, that while the noblest feelings of the human heart beamed from the full and expressive eyes of that individual, the groans of one who had fallen by his hand, were, even at the distance of a few hundred yards, filling those by whom his couch of suffering was surrounded, with grief and consternation—yet this was the case, and this is man.

We presume that our anxious readers are curious to know by what means the non-combatant portion of our friends obtained the information which induced their unusually early desertion of their respective beds. As this is a point of nearly as much importance, as the present political question, “are the Catholics to have emancipation, or are they not?” we shall endeavour to explain. We have already remarked that the porter’s curiosity was not a little excited in regard to the possible motives for our hero’s early exit through the ponderous gates which he guarded with all the fidelity of a second Cerberus; and when Sir Edward’s valet made his appearance in the *loge* an hour later, he communicated the fact to him, with an air of much mystery and importance. Now this same valet had already formed a travelling acquaintance with Miss Stanley’s maid, and to her he repeated the mystery of Delmaine’s singularly early departure, no one knew whither, but under an injunc-

tion of the strictest secrecy. Miss Stanley, like our hero, had enjoyed dreams of a very pleasing nature ; and though, unlike him, she had no daylight appointments to keep, she awoke at an early hour, and after one or two ineffectual attempts to renew those pleasing dreams, she determined on ringing for her servant. In a few minutes Harris appeared, and, with a countenance big with some important secret, proceeded to the discharge of her customary duties. For ten long minutes she contrived to keep down the communication which was every moment rising to her lips ; but longer concealment was beyond her strength, for she felt the secret literally gnawing at her vitals.

"What do you think, ma'am," at length burst abruptly from her labouring bosom, "young Mr. Delmaine went out this morning before daybreak, and nobody knows where."

"Are you certain, Harris, that this is the case?" inquired her mistress anxiously, all the occurrences of the preceding day rushing fearfully on her memory, and converting surmise into almost certainty.

"Quite certain, ma'am," returned the officious waiting woman. "Sir Edward's valet had it from the porter himself, who let him out. He says also, that he had privately given instructions last night to be called at five in the morning."

Miss Stanley now felt fully satisfied that she had been deceived in regard to the affected indifference manifested by our hero for his enemy, and she shuddered to think of the consequences which might ensue, and of which she was in some measure, however innocently, the cause. Finishing her toilet in the hasty manner above described, she despatched Harris to the apartment of her father, with a request that he would see her immediately in the breakfast room. Taking her cue from the anxiety and hurry evinced by her mistress, Harris instantly decided, in her own mind, that Mr. Delmaine had gone out to fight a duel ; and having succeeded in awakening the colonel, she thought she might take it upon

herself to announce—perhaps with a view to stimulate his movements—that something very dreadful had happened, which rendered it necessary he should see Miss Stanley immediately.

“What is it, woman? what has happened?” exclaimed the colonel, starting from his bed, and hastening to prepare himself for the interview desired.

But the woman answered not, for she was already embarked on a second expedition. Harris, like many other and higher deputies, now that she felt the importance of her delegation, fancied that she was fully justified in exceeding the letter of her instructions. Hastening, therefore, to Sir Edward’s room, she knocked at the door with a violence that almost threatened its demolition.

“Who is there?” muttered the baronet, awakening from his first sleep, which had commenced about four o’clock in the morning.

“It is me, sir,” replied Harris, boldly, and in the tone of one who feels that the interruption is one of moment to the party interrupted.

“And who is me?” inquired Sir Edward, unable to recognise the voice, which, however, he had no difficulty in ascertaining to be that of a female.

“It is me, Harris, Miss Stanley’s maid, sir; I am come to tell you that young Mr. Delmaine is gone out to fight a duel.”

“Gone out to fight a duel!” cried Sir Edward, startled as if a thunderbolt had sounded in his ears, “impossible!” But even while his lips pronounced such an event to be impossible, his heart acknowledged a contrary impression; and dressing himself with an expedition that would have excited his utmost surprise at any other moment, and without once ringing for his servant to assist in the operation, he appeared in the breakfast room almost as soon as the colonel and Miss Stanley. The latter now entered into a detail of the circumstances which had occurred on the preceding day, near the jeweller’s, when it was at once decided that a meeting had been the result.

All doubt on the subject was soon at an end. The curiosity of Harris had been raised to the highest possible pitch, and she felt a certain degree of importance in having been the means, even though a secondary one, of conveying this intelligence to those so every way interested in the affair. Harris had, in her younger days, been a great reader of romances, and she recollected that it was customary with heroes and heroines, when absenting themselves without permission, to leave some written document, explanatory of their motives, behind them. It now occurred to her, that if she could find her way to Mr. Delmaine's bed-room, she would probably meet with some paper of this description; and she imagined that on such an occasion, it would not be a very great sin to enter a single gentleman's sleeping apartment. "Screwing her courage to the sticking place," she therefore boldly entered, and almost the first thing that met her inquiring eye, was the letter, sealed and directed to Sir Edward, which lay on the dressing table. Seizing the prize, she bolted again from the room, as if the ghost of Delmaine had pursued her, and hastening to Sir Edward, handed it to him.

The old baronet broke the seal with eagerness, and rather devoured than read its contents; while the varying expression of his countenance betrayed to his friends the several passages which more or less displeased and vexed him.

"Humph! it is but too true," he at length exclaimed, folding the memento impatiently, and placing it in his pocket. "He says he has gone out to fight a duel, but with whom, or on what account, he does not state. The rest of his letter contains nothing more than hypocritical professions of tender affection and gratitude, and canting acknowledgments for what he calls my uniform kindness towards him—all stuff! Pretty affection, and pretty gratitude, truly, and a pretty way of evincing it, by killing me with anxiety and fears for his safety! But what is to be done, Colonel—what measures are to be adopted? or is it too late to interfere?"

And the eyes of Helen asked precisely the same questions ; but the colonel had now become less familiar with the language of the eyes, than with that of the lips, and he replied, with the true dignity and feeling of the soldier,

“ My dear friend, we must have patience, and await the result. Nothing can be done to prevent this affair taking place, without compromising your nephew’s character for courage ; and even if any thing could be done, it is now too late. They were to meet at seven o’clock, and it now wants but a quarter to eight ; besides, all who go out on these occasions do not fall. Let us, therefore, await the termination of the affair with patience.”

“ Patience !” exclaimed the good old baronet, petulantly. “ It is well for you, Stanley, to talk of patience, who have no nephew’s existence at stake ; but I cannot be cool or patient under my present feelings. Clifford is the son of the brother of my affection ; he has lived with me from infancy, and to lose him now would break my heart.”

“ But you will not lose him,” returned the colonel, with an air of confidence ; “ at least let us hope not. If I might advise,” he continued, smiling, “ it would be no bad policy to have a substantial breakfast in readiness ; for as by your letter it appears they were to meet at seven, is very probable that he and Dormer, by whom I presume he is accompanied, will be here almost immediately. It would be a pity to keep them waiting, for I know by experience that sharp morning air, and the smell of gunpowder, are great provocatives of appetite.”

The colonel’s object was to divert Sir Edward’s thoughts, and he succeeded ; for no sooner had the worthy baronet admitted the possibility of his nephew’s return, not faint from loss of blood, as he had been busy in anticipating, but faint from excess of hunger, than he desired some half dozen dishes to be brought in and placed near the fire, in readiness to sustain an immediate

assault. This point settled, the party had relapsed into that state of abstraction and silent communion with their own feelings, which had been interrupted, as above stated, by the appearance of the guilty party himself.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was a beautiful morning in September; the rich tints of the autumnal leaf shone in mellowed beauty beneath the rays of a meridian sun, and the golden flickering atmosphere seemed to impart its own softness to all of animate and inanimate nature. The gay edifices of Paris appeared to rise more lofty in the hazy distance, and the tolling of numerous bells was borne more distinctly on the ear; the city seemed to have poured forth her inhabitants, as for a jubilee; and one continuous crowd of both sexes extended from the palace of the Tuileries, and through the streets of Rivoli, and de la Paix, to the Boulevard des Capucins. Here, swollen with the tides which rushed in from every side as to one common centre, the dense and stationary masses were blocked up without a possibility of movement. From thence the anxious people were thronged along the vast line of avenue conducting to the Porte St. Denis, and through the Faubourg of that name to the spacious plain that opens beyond the barrier. Here the great body of the population was assembled, and as far as the eye could reach on either hand, and extending to the distant town of St. Denis, the spires of whose churches glittered on high, amid that golden atmosphere, like beacons of hallowed light, a confused mass of carriages of every description, of horsemen, and of pedestrians, was discernible. In the Faubourg, and throughout the plain, the crowd was divided by a corps of infantry, whose office

it was to preserve unencumbered a space appropriated to the movements of what all felt to be the objects of their attraction and curiosity.

Along the Boulevards, and in the streets, that duty was performed by mounted *gendarmes*, whose mettled chargers were made to prance along the line, now threatening the pretty foot of some Parisian belle with the rude hoof, as she exceeded the boundary prescribed, now lashing the long tail beneath her bonnet, and producing a scream which, in the next instant, was chased by the forced laugh that sprung at once from a consciousness of security, and a dread of ridicule. Sometimes, on these occasions, an *ancien militaire*, on whose arm reclined a sister, a mistress, or a friend, with no other distinctive marks of his profession than his fierce look and enormous mustachio, would curl the latter as if in defiance of the offender whom he seemed to dare to a repetition of the act; but more frequently the light-hearted citizens, treating the thing with levity, were rather disposed to admire the dexterity of the cavalier, and the prancing movements of his horse, than to condemn the performance of a duty that had been strictly enjoined. Gayety beamed from every countenance; light repartee flew from one to another amid the several groups; and that seeming indifference to, and forgetfulness of all subjects unconnected with the gratification of the present moment, was never more observable than on the present occasion.

But though the eye lingered not unpleasingly along the line of fair forms and joyous countenances which thronged the streets and Boulevards, it turned with an expression of deeper interest towards the tall masses of buildings which rose on either hand. At every window of every department of these, numbers of beautiful and elegantly dressed women were to be seen, awaiting some momentarily expected pageantry, with an impatience not inferior to that manifested by the groups below. A stranger who could have forgotten the changes operated within the few preceeding years, might have been incli-

ned to believe that the population of Paris were then met to receive Napoleon on his return from one of those numerous conquests which have identified his name with immortality ; or that the nuptials of some favourite prince or princess were then celebrating. But neither the triumphal entry of a successful and warlike chief, nor the joyous ceremony of a royal wedding, was the spectacle which anxious thousands were assembled to behold. It was the funeral of their king, Pleased with public exhibitions of every description, with this light and frivolous people, a triumph, a fête, or a funeral, were alike matters of excitement ; the same gayety of deportment being evinced, and the same absence of all other sentiment, than the absorbing one of curiosity.— But though unimpressed by the solemnity of manner fitted to such occasions, the natural liveliness of their character was restrained within the just bounds of decorum ; and while but few amid those congregated thousands, comprising the very lowest classes of society, suffered their countenances to wear the semblance of a grief which they did not feel, no unbecoming interruptions were offered, no vociferous or insulting exclamations were uttered ; but each, with that sort of tact which is almost peculiarly French, seemed fully sensible of the due limit which should be set to the indulgence of his natural gayety. For upwards of two hours they had waited decorously, though not without impatience, for the signal which was to announce the departure of the *cortège* from the palace.

At length the cannon began to peal at intervals throughout the heavy atmosphere, and, as if by one common and simultaneous instinct, all necks and heads were stretched in the direction by which it was to advance. Even the vast throngs assembled on the plain of St. Dennis, although conscious that much time must elapse before it could appear in sight, turned their eyes in the same quarter. Preceded by a corps of the *gendarmérie d'élite*, the procession now turned the Rue de Rivoli, and crossing the Place Vendôme, entered into

the Rue de la Paix. All the troops then stationed in Paris, and its immediate vicinity, were present. First came the numerous infantry, with their arms reversed, after whom followed the horse artillery, the finest corps in the service of France, dragging the heavy rumbling guns with one hand, and holding a lighted match in the other : the men of this corps were truly imposing in appearance. To these succeeded the heavy cavalry of the line ; several coaches, bearing the royal arms of France, and containing princes of the blood, preceded the car in which was deposited all that now remained of the eighteenth Louis.

Nothing could be more gorgeous than this vehicle—nothing could tend less to impress a stranger with the fact of its being a receptacle for the dead. Four gilt pillars rising from the several angles of the car, and terminated above by plumes of white ostrich feathers, supported a canopy of the same material, relieved by festoons of the richest crimson velvet. The dazzling splendour of the bier, which, like the body of the car, was also highly gilded, attracted every eye, and was scarcely surpassed by the regalia which had been deposited on the former. Behind these came the archbishops, the bishops, and inferior clergy of the metropolis, after whom following a long line of mendicants, habited in gray frocks and hoods, and bearing each a lighted torch. Succeeding these, and in full costume, came the marshals of France, with their white sashes girding their loins, and a host of decorations pending from their breasts. A numerous group of young and handsome aids-de-camp, and other officers of the staff, followed in their train, prancing their gayly caparisoned steeds, in despite of the solemnity of the occasion, and saluting and saluted by the fairer and more select of those female groupes which lined the windows in the principal streets, and along the Boulevards. After these came the municipal authorities of Paris, and then the royal foot guards, and the corps of the hundred Swiss, followed by the household cavalry. First the cuirassiers, with their

glittering armour and heavy helmets, wedged in close column, presented their imposing front, while numerous squadrons of hussars, their bear-skin caps, and long mustaches, giving additional fierceness to their looks, composed the centre. The lighter and more elegant divisions of the lancers next appeared, dazzling and delighting every female eye with the motion of the gay flags, suspended from their long lances, and the unceasing action of their plumes, waving in recumbent gracefulness over their shakos. To these succeeded the *garde du corps* of the king, and that of Monsieur, in their full and richly embroidered dresses, and the procession was finally terminated by a second corps of the *gendarmerie d'élite*.

The only apartment which Dormer had been enabled to secure for his friends, was an *entresol* on the Boulevard de Gand, which, however, commanded a distinct view of the ceremony. Sir Edward and the colonel were not of the party—the former feeling himself too unwell to venture out, and the latter being occupied in writing letters of importance. Immediately below the window at which Miss Stanley, Dormer, and our hero now stood, a small group, consisting of two ladies and the gentleman already described as O'Sullivan's friend, had taken their stand without the crowd. The eyes of both females were directed towards the party; but an observation from their companion, who, in glancing upwards, had distinguished our hero, caused them to turn suddenly round, and Delmaine instantly recognised in the fuller and more matronly figure, his late *compagnon de voyage*, Madame Dorjeville. She looked at him for a second, but immediately dropped her eyes, and resumed her original position. Her companion appeared to be about nineteen. Her hair, of a rich auburn, was luxuriant and glossy; her skin was delicately fair, and her large blue eyes sparkled with fires that attested any thing but the slumber of the passions. Her gaze encountered, but shrunk not from that of Delmaine. Yet her look was not bold; it had a blended expression of touch-

ing softness and exciting languor, which fascinated and subdued. Her figure was elegantly formed, and her attitudes, free and unstudied, were singularly striking in their gracefulness.

"*Est-ce bien lui,*" she at length exclaimed, in an animated tone, and evidently replying to the observation of the gentleman, to whom she now turned, "*ah ! qu'il est joli garçon.*"

The parties were too near not to be overheard by Delmaine and his friends, and each was variously affected by the remark. Miss Stanley trembled and turned pale, while a feeling of disappointment stole across her mind as she gazed on the beautiful and dangerous speaker. Our hero affected not to have heard it ; but in the gleam of satisfaction which lighted up his countenance, a less attentive and less interesting observer than Helen, would have discovered not only that he had heard, but that he was pleased with this expression of interest from one so evidently fascinating. Dormer watched the countenance of his friends, and understood their feelings. He foresaw, in the delicate sensibility of the one, and the impetuous passions of the other, sources of much future disquietude to both, and he almost felt inclined to wish they had never met.

"Surely these people will never come," said Miss Stanley, with an air of impatience. "We have already been here upwards of an hour."

"They cannot be detained much longer," observed Dormer ; "it is nearly twelve o'clock, and that was the hour appointed for the departure of the *cortège.*"

"For my part," exclaimed Delmaine, endeavouring to assume an air of indifference, "I find more amusement in studying the anxious countenances which have been exhibited for the last hour, than I could possibly derive from witnessing the most splendid procession in the world. Do you not agree with me, Miss Stanley?"

"Much depends on the interest we feel in those countenances," returned Helen, in a quick yet faltering tone. "There are some faces that please more than

others, and I dare say you have not been studying *all* the different countenances which compose those groups, Mr. Delmaine."

Clifford felt and coloured at the sarcasm conveyed, for he could not deny that the observation of Miss Stanley was perfectly just. His only answer was a look—but a look so full of eloquence and softness, that it banished every unfavourable impression from the mind of Helen, and restored her once more to gayety and good humour.

"*Voilà les grandes eaux de Versailles,*" said a young Frenchman of fashionable appearance, who, with his friend, had now joined Madame Dorjeville and her party.

Not only the eyes of the little group below were turned in the direction to which he pointed, but those also of Delmaine and his party. At a short distance, and closely pressed by the crowd, our hero now beheld his quondam friend, the enormous Mrs. Rivers, accompanied by two nearly equally voluminous masses of matter, which he presumed to be her daughters. They were escorted by the tall gentleman who had played so conspicuous a part in the packet scene described in the opening of the volume. Mrs. Rivers, whose nature and maxim it was to be perpetually bustling, was by no means inactive on the present occasion. Like many others, she had been unable to procure an apartment in any part of that long extent through which the procession was to pass; and she now sought, as she elegantly expressed herself, to "make the best of it," where she was.

It was singularly unfortunate for Mrs. Rivers, at least on the present occasion, and under existing circumstances, that Nature had curtailed her of much length, while she had added proportionably to her breadth, for she was literally thrown into a copious perspiration by the repeated and successive efforts she made to raise herself on her toes on a line with those who so completely intercepted her view. Foiled in this attempt, she now had recourse to another expedient, and seemed

resolved to gain, what in England is vulgarly termed, "elbow room." With this view, and much to the amusement of some, and annoyance of others, she kept fidgeting her short thick person in every direction, until she finally succeeded in effecting a passage; when, establishing herself in front of the line, she seemed perfectly indifferent to the position of her party. Meanwhile, the Hottentot proportions of the young ladies, literally suspended from the arms of their tall cavalier, kept moving up and down with little less velocity than that exhibited by their mamma; so great, indeed, that in one instance it nearly threatened a catastrophe.

It was a peculiarity with Mr. Darte to be considered as being on the best of terms with whatever lady he conversed; and nothing, he fancied, was more likely to impress his male acquaintance with the fact, than that sort of whispering familiarity in which he was wont to indulge. Several of his friends were among the surrounding concourse; and as he now stopped both to the right and to the left, to whisper observations to the young ladies, which were by no means of a nature to require so much seeming mystery, his countenance wore an air of satisfaction and self-sufficiency, which was intended to attract the attention of others.

Unfortunately, the persons of Misses Fanny and Lucy, although scarcely inferior in dimensions, were very little more elevated than that of their mamma, whose example in rising on the toe, some sixty times in a minute, they now most sedulously imitated. Just as Mr. Darte, whose observant eye had caught the gaze of a gentleman of his acquaintance directed towards him and his companions, stooped, with an air of tenderness, rather unusual for him, thrown into his naturally stern features, to make some remark to Miss Lucy, that lady's head propelled rather violently upwards by the impetus of more than a hundred weight of animal matter, came in contact with the *nez retroussé* of the gallant, which suffered so much by the concussion, that he was compelled to have recourse to a cambric handkerchief, with which

he now occupied himself in stanching the blood that flowed rather abundantly.

Miss Lucy apologized, of course, but being more intent on seeing the procession than interested in the result of her *gaucherie*, seemed to pay no further attention to the circumstance, at which Miss Fanny, however, laughed most heartily. Mr. Darte, though secretly cursing the unlucky star which had led him accidentally that morning into a rencontre with these not the most polished of his acquaintance, by whom he had been pressed into the service for the day, was too polite to betray his vexation. He would even have had command enough over himself to appear gracious, and treat this offence to his dignity with badinage, had he not unfortunately discovered that the acquaintance just alluded to, had been a witness of the accident, and was now amusing himself at his expense with an individual who had joined him. Mr. Darte was a true Frenchman in one respect; he could endure any thing but ridicule, but this was a weapon to which he was peculiarly vulnerable, and now that he saw it directed by his own friends, his heart sunk within him; nothing but the recollection of balls and suppers, which flashed confusedly across his mind, prevented his being absolutely rude to his companions. Mr. Darte had the happy talent of reconciling his feelings to his interests, and even when he hated those to whom he was compelled to pay attention, could smile and appear all amiability and kindness.

Few of our readers, however, who have spent any time in Paris, can fail to recognise an old acquaintance in Mr. Darte, who has long been a fixture in that gay metropolis. Few can have lounged in the gardens of the Tuileries between the hours of three and five, without meeting a tall, stiff-backed gentleman, with some half dozen yards of cravat encircling his throat, and descending over his chest in multitudinous folds, his elbows preserving an angle of forty-five degrees, and adhering to that position with studied and unyielding pertinacity. Few of those who have been in the habit

of attending the English *soirées* in Paris, can have failed to remark a consequential being, who, pirouetting *à la Paul*, with a no very Paul-like face or figure, has often placed the toes of the surrounding party in jeopardy, while the peculiar curling of the upper lip would have induced one to believe that he was rather suffering torture from the operation, than deriving any pleasure in the amusement. This accomplishment had, however, proved of the greatest service to the tall gentleman, who had succeeded in pirouetting himself into the good graces of the young ladies, while another peculiar talent for which he was remarkable, had insured him the suffrages of the mammas. Mr. Darté was a second Kitchener, and could expatiate on the various duties of the purveyor's department, with nearly as much facility as he turned on his heels. Wherever he chanced to dine, he insured himself a round of future invitations, by the unqualified praises he bestowed on the taste displayed in the culinary arrangements; for as all were in the habit of hearing him volunteer his opinions on such occasions, it was presumed that his privilege was acknowledged, and his judgment undisputed. Nothing could be more admirably convenient to the tall gentleman than this sort of life, for a good dinner some three or four days in the week, in a great degree compensated for the privations to which he would otherwise have been subjected by a somewhat limited income. Wherever he dined, however, he was expected to dance almost exclusively with the young ladies of the family, when there chanced to be any; for good dancers were much in requisition, and a young lady who had any pretensions in that line, would as soon have dispensed with the services of Colinet, as with those of Mr. Darté, since good music was not more necessary in the one, than good dancing in the other, to make her appear to advantage. In short, no dancing dog or monkey, amid the host of those which were daily exhibited by the young Savoyards in the streets, and on the Boulevards of Paris, was more frequently called on to exhibit its powers than Mr. W. C.

H. D. F. Darté, whose names were even numerous as his steps. He was often heard not to complain, but to boast that the requisition in which his legs were so generally held, invariably cost him a pair of silks per night.

The tall gentleman's enumerations of the expenses incurred by the hire of cabriolets in attending these parties, were also frequent; but he had been observed by more than one person removing the shoes in which he had walked to the porters' lodge, and substituting those magic pumps which were to charm all female eyes, and which were carefully drawn from a side pocket of his capacious cloak.

As the farmer consults his barometer in order to ascertain the state of the weather, in the same manner, and with the same confidence, were the young Englishmen in Paris wont to consult Mr. Darté for information in regard to the amusements of the evening. Were a dozen parties to take place on the same night, he knew where, and by whom given; for such was the estimation into which he had danced himself, that invitations came pouring in from every quarter, and often puzzled him in his choice. He had, however, *goût* sufficient to prefer those where something more than *eau sucrée*—that terror of all Englishmen—constituted the refreshment of the evening; for while he gratified the young ladies by the display of an agility by no means common to a serious-looking personage, measuring six feet some inches in height, he seldom neglected to gratify himself in return, by paying assiduous court to the good things on the supper-table.

This was a primary consideration, and he sought every opportunity of enlarging his substantial supper-giving acquaintance. He had been introduced to two young ladies, a short time prior to a trip he made to London, as the daughters of a city couple, who, it was whispered, intended to give large entertainments in Paris during the winter; and it was the mother of these young ladies whom he subsequently met on board the steam-packet, on his return, in the person of Mrs. Rivers. In what manner he succeeded in reconciling himself to that lady, in the cabin, we could never learn;

but Mr. Darte, it has been observed, had much plausibility of manner, and, we doubt not, that by mixing with his apologies, which his interests must have rendered sincere, certain flattering observations in regard to Misses Fanny and Lucy, he had contrived to disarm the fat lady of her resentment, and to insinuate himself entirely into her good graces.

The remark of the young Frenchman was occasioned by a *jeu de mot*, which had become almost proverbial both among French and English, in regard to the Rivers family, whose vast proportions had induced the appellation.

"*Au moins ce ne sont pas des eaux coulantes,*" said the fair friend of Madame Dorjeville, smiling and looking archly, "*qu'en pensez-vous, marquis ?*"

"*Ma foi, je ne m'occupe guères de ces êtres là,*" replied the individual interrogated, who, with his hands crossed behind him, stood leaning against a tree in the most indolent of attitudes. "*Cependant,*" he continued, attempting to keep up the pun, "*vous avez tort—Elles peuvent couler facilement.*"

"*Et comment, mon cher marquis ? expliquez-nous cela, de grâce,*" returned the other, playfully.

"*Elles peuvent couler bas,*" was the reply, accompanied by a smile.

"*Ah, Monsieur le Marquis de Forsac, c'est un jeu de mot détestable que cela ; à peine le pardonnerait-on à un étranger !*" said the lady, with mock seriousness, and lingering on every word. Then, in a livelier tone, she added, "*Mais, pourquoi faites-vous si peu de cas de ces belles dames. Ah, maintenant je suis au fait ; je parie que vous êtes jaloux de ce grand Monsieur, qui fait l'aimable auprès d'elles.*"

"*Jaloux de lui, Adeline, êtes-vous folle ?*" replied the other, with an air of conscious superiority, and a look which might have been interpreted, "you, at least, do not think so." "*C'est la plus grande peste de la société—Il est rempli de fatuité—et, malheureusement, on le rencontre partout.*"

"*La plus grande preuve que sa société est recherchée,*" rejoined the female, in the same playful tone.

"*Du tout,*" said the marquis, endeavouring to conceal his pique; "*il se fait valoir comme Pâul au ballet. Il danse bien, et voilà tout—Un singe du Jardin des Plantes ferait autant.*"

Vraiment ! danse-t-il bien ? j'aime cela à la folie, surtout dans un étranger. Il faut absolument que vous le présentiez chez moi."

The marquis bit his lip, and glancing at the opposite range of windows, he beheld Miss Stanley, who, dressed à la Française, had never appeared to greater advantage. "*Connaissez-vous cette dame, St. Armand ?*" he said, in a low voice, and turning to his companion.

The young man raised his glass, and after a momentary examination, confessed that he did not. But the female whom he had familiarly called Adeline, again glanced in the direction of our hero, and then turning to the marquis, observed—

"*Je la crois Anglaise, mais vous—connaissez-vous ce joli garçon qui est auprès d'elle ?*"

"*Lequel ?*" inquired the marquis; "*je vois plusieurs personnes.*"

"*Je parle de ce beau jeune homme avec les yeux noirs et perçans, la taille haute, et une figure distinguée.*"

"*Je vois un jeune homme avec des yeux noirs, et la taille haute ; mais je ne trouve ni beau distingué,*" replied De Forsac, with some degree of humour.

"*Nous vous connaissons, mon cher Adolphe—vous n'accordez pas facilement le moindre avantage à qui que ce soit de vos rivaux—mais n'importe—c'est bien lui—le connaissez-vous ?*"

"*Ma foi, non—comment voulez-vous que je le connaisse ?*" returned the marquis, evidently mortified at the praises bestowed on the stranger.

"*Eh bien, mon cher, je vais vous le dire—C'est le jeune Anglais qui vient de se battre avec De Hillier.*"

"*Impossible !*" exclaimed the marquis and his friend,

at the same moment. "*Où avez-vous appris cela ?*" continued the former.

"*Ce Monsieur Anglais, qui nous a quitté au moment de votre arrivée nous en a fait part.*"

"*Parbleu il fera fortune parmi nos femmes,*" involuntarily murmured the marquis, "*mais quelle est cette dame à côté de lui ?—est-ce sa sœur ?*"

"*Oh, pour cela, nous n'en savons rien,*" said Madame Dorjeville, who had hitherto remained silent ; "*ce Monsieur nous a dit, cependant, que ce duel avait été occasioné par une belle dame ; et nous aimons à la folie, nous autres femmes, ces preux cavaliers qui se font tuer pour leurs maîtresses.*"

"*Est-ce ainsi donc !*" sighed the marquis, raising his elegant form and taking the arm of his friend. "*Adieu, Dorjeville—adieu, Adeline, à ce soir.*"

"*Adieu, Marquis—adieu, St. Armand. On reçoit chez Astelli aujourd'hui,*" rejoined their companions, who, now left to themselves, drew within the extremity of the line of spectators, while the two Frenchmen continued their lounge up and down the Boulevard, the marquis occasionally glancing at the window which had previously attracted his notice.

During this colloquy, the *cortège* had passed, and the household cavalry were then within a few paces of the spot where Madame Dorjeville and her companions stood, at the inner edge of the line. At the moment when the cuirassiers of the guard came immediately opposite, a temporary delay in the procession caused them to halt, and Delmaine, whose attention was directed to the group, saw an officer, of powerful frame quit his station in the ranks, and advance towards the females, to whom he gave his hand, with all the freedom of an old acquaintance. Beneath the enormous helmet, and amid the shining plates of steel with which his vast form was encircled, he had no difficulty in recognising M. de Warner, and he could not account to himself, why he felt uncomfortable in witnessing the familiarity which seemed to exist between the parties. Madame Dorje-

ville, however, he recollected, had described herself as being the widow of a colonel of cuirassiers, and he presumed that this officer had served in the same corps, in which case the peculiar freedom of his manner and address might be accounted for. The *cortège* now proceeded, and the cuirassiers moving forward, De Warner prepared to join them, but his horse became suddenly restive, and plunging with violence, refused to obey the rein. The crowd around, were at first slow in receding, and both Madame Dorjeville and her friend became exceedingly terrified. Another furious plunge brought the unmanageable charger to the very edge of the line. The dense mass by which the retreat of the females was impeded now suddenly gave way, leaving a space entirely unoccupied, when the younger of the two losing her equilibrium, in the removal of the support against which she had reclined her nearly fainting form, suddenly fell to the earth. At this moment the furious horse had reared so high, as to be nearly thrown on his haunches; and his pawing feet threatened instant destruction in their descent to the almost motionless frame of the young Frenchwoman, whom no one seemed possessed of courage or presence of mind sufficient to remove.

The moment was critical. With the swiftness of thought, Delmaine sprang from the *entresol* upon the Boulevard, and fixing his eye steadily upon the head of the animal, while he extended his right arm, caught the bridle near the bit as he descended, and by a powerful and vigorous effort succeeded in turning him round.—The unwieldy brute staggered for a moment, as if shot, and then came violently to the ground. De Warner fell under him. His helmet had broken loose, and was soon nearly trodden to pieces by the squadrons of hussars and lancers, which followed after his own corps.—His ponderous armour rattled like that of a second Ajax, on the pavement, and his huge frame was nearly covered with dust in the struggles which he made to extricate himself from his steed. Scarcely had our hero

accomplished this feat, when, devoting his attention to the young female, he raised her, trembling, and nearly exhausted, from the earth. Her hair was loose, and partially concealed her features, which were now pale from agitation and alarm, but in her soft blue eye there was a touching expression of gratitude and abandonment, which it was dangerous to behold. Clifford looked around for Madame Dorjeville, for he felt that the gaze of Miss Stanley was upon them.

That lady, who had been borne away by the receding crowd, now advanced, when her friend, in a low soft tone of voice, accompanied by a look of ineffable sweetness, took the opportunity to remark—“*Est-ce donc à vous, Monsieur, que je dois la vie ?—Oh ! quel bonheur !*”

Delmaine involuntarily pressed the hand he held, but was silent. The rear of the procession being now passed, a *fiacre* that had been called, was suffered to draw up, and he hastened to conduct her to it. Madame Dorjeville now seemed to recognise him for the first time ; and expressing a hope that he would favour them with a visit—although she neglected to give him an address—hurried after her friend, evidently glad of an opportunity to avoid all further conversation. The coach now drove off, and as our hero was in the act of turning, he felt a hand upon his shoulder, and nearly at the same instant beheld the huge frame of Dé Warner, who had been rescued from his disagreeable position by a couple of the *gendarmérie d'élite*, who brought up the rear of the procession.

Vexed and mortified at the ridiculous figure he now exhibited, this officer had given his horse in charge to a bystander, fully determined to fasten a quarrel on the offender. In fact, his appearance at this moment was such as almost to justify his extreme irritability of temper, which increased in proportion with the smiles and titterings of many of the small groups that continued to linger near the spot, in the expectation of a result.—His disfigured helmet, covered with dust, stood tottering on the very extremity of his head, to which it was only

secured by the chain which pended from its sides, and encircled his chin. The whole of his right side, his face and hair, were also covered with dust, while a streak of blood, issuing from a slight wound in the temple, produced by a flint he had encountered in his fall, mingled with the latter, and gave a hideous expression to his countenance, now flushed high with the crimson of anger, and contrasting strongly with that of our hero, at this moment unusually and strikingly pale. The right hand of the cuirassier grasped the naked sword which he held at the moment of his fall, and in his left was a spur, which had been torn from his heel in the powerful efforts he had made to extricate himself from his charger. His white military small-clothes were also much soiled; and from the extremity of the cuirass to the elbow, a rent was visible along the right arm of his splendid uniform. In short, with the exception of the bulk and stature, nothing could less resemble the dashing cavalier who had so recently appeared in all the pride of self-sufficiency at the head of his troop, than the now mortified and indignant Capitaine De Warner.

The first object of the cuirassier, on regaining his feet, was, as we have just observed, to punish the offender; for, though perfectly aware that that act alone had preserved the young female with whom he appeared to be on such terms of familiarity, from serious injury, if not death; still this consideration was insufficient to stifle his indignation at having been made a subject for so much ridicule. It happened at the moment when his unruly charger began so unceremoniously to threaten the lives of his catholic majesty's subjects, that Mrs. Rivers had, after much shuffling and elbowing, contrived to secure a place near the spot where the accident occurred. Now this lady was, as our readers must have remarked on their first introduction, eminently gifted with lungs, and these she thought could never be more appropriately exercised than on the present occasion. Screaming, therefore, with all her strength, and producing nearly as much terror in the bystanders as the refractory

horse itself, the shrill tones of her voice at length reached, and were recognised by her daughters. Mr. Darté was instantly despatched to her rescue, and now had the happiness of once more supporting the delicate frame of Mrs. Rivers.

Stunned by his fall, and nearly blinded with dust, the cuirassier, whose anger had deprived him of all self-possession, had but an indistinct perception of persons. It is not, therefore, surprising that, amid his confusion, he should have mistaken Mrs. Rivers for the lady just rescued by our hero, or Mr. Darté for the individual by whom he had been overthrown. In this belief he was confirmed by the blood-stained handkerchief which that gentleman still held exposed, and which De Warner naturally supposed to be a sufficient clue to his identity. Advancing, therefore, with rapid strides to the spot, he extended his right arm in a direct line with the throat of Mr. Darté, much to the terror of that gentleman, the countless folds of whose cravat had never incurred a greater risk of decomposition. Suddenly drawing back, however, he eluded the grasp, and holding Mrs. Rivers as a sort of barrier between them, he inquired, in unfeigned astonishment, what was meant or intended.

"Did you not throw me down, sir?" demanded De Warner, still extending his arm in a hostile position.

"No, no—no, no, sir!" exclaimed Mrs. Rivers, before the other could find time to reply. "That is the gentleman;" and she pointed to Delmaine.

The sound of her voice was quite enough to satisfy the cuirassier that he was wrong. "I am very sorry," he said, bluntly; "I ask your pardon for my mistake;" and he moved towards our hero, who was then closing the door of the *fiacre* into which he had just handed Madame Dorjeville and her friend.

"Pray, sir, I wish to know what you meant by throwing me down and my horse?" he inquired, in the blustering manner peculiar to him, and in the language of one who, evidently little conversant with the elegancies of his own tongue, rendered the deficiency

more remarkable by the foreign accent in which he delivered himself.

In an instant the pale hue of Delmaine's countenance was succeeded by a glow of indignation, and his eyes, lighted up with momentary passion, flashed on those of De Warner; but suddenly checking his resentment, he endeavoured to reply with calmness, while the trembling tones of his voice betrayed his violent efforts to self-command.

"I am sorry that I should have been the cause of your misfortune, but no other measure could have saved the lady from perishing beneath your horse's feet. And surely," he added, as if he thought this speech too conciliatory, "the life of a human being is not to be measured in the same scale with an accident of the trifling nature you have experienced."

"Accident of a trifling nature, sir!" replied De Warner, with increasing vehemence, and emboldened by the temperate language of our hero. "Do you call this a trifling accident, to throw my horse down, and put me in this condition? Did you mean to insult me, sir?"

"I have already explained the motive of my conduct," said Clifford, still struggling to subdue his feelings, "and that explanation I conceive to be fully satisfactory. Do you require any thing more, sir?"

"Do I require any thing more—do I require any thing more!" repeated De Warner, somewhat startled at the fierce look which accompanied the last sentence. "I require, sir, to know what you meant by throwing me down?"

"I have nothing further to say on the subject," replied Clifford, sternly. "You have had my answer, sir. But this is no place to enter into explanations," he pursued, as he hastened to join his friends, who were still at the same window, anxiously awaiting the termination of the scene; "here is my address." De Warner took the proffered card, and looked at the name, a confused recollection of which passed through his mind at

the instant, though he could not remember when or where he had heard it mentioned.

At this moment the marquis and his friend approached; and condoling with the cuirassier on his misfortune, inquired if he knew the young Englishman by whom he had been so cavalierly treated.

"Know him! not I, indeed," vociferated De Warner; "but here is his card, which——"

"*Vous avez raison, mon cher,*" exclaimed the marquis, interrupting him. "*C'est un Dom Quichotte, donc il faut absolument corriger la manie d'aventures. C'est le jeune Anglais qui vient de se battre avec De Hillier.*"

"*Eh quoi! vous plaisantez, Marquis, ce n'est pas possible,*" rejoined the cuirassier, in evident astonishment.

"*C'est la Dorjeville qui me l'a dit, et vous savez qu'elle n'ignore rien,*" said the marquis, taking his arm, and proceeding up the Boulevard.

De Warner pondered with the air of one apprehensive of having gone too far, and his passion now seemed considerably abated. Having obtained but an indistinct view of his person in the morning, he had not recognised the opponent of De Hillier in our hero, with whom he was by no means anxious to embroil himself, after what had so recently taken place. Like all bullying and overbearing characters, he wanted that genuine courage of the soul, which is inseparable from good sense and good feeling. His brutal manners and gigantic proportions had hitherto had the effect of intimidating many weak spirits, by whom vulgar boasting and physical power, are regarded as never failing indications of valour; but he had seen enough of Delmaine, even during the last few minutes, to satisfy him that he was not to be awed by such contemptible advantages; and, that the most prudent measure he could adopt, would be to suffer the matter to rest altogether. The point now was to convey this sudden change of sentiment to the marquis, in such a manner as to leave no question in regard

to his courage; for he had certainly given him, though indirectly, to understand, that it was his intention to notice what he had so hastily resolved to interpret as an insult.

"*Ma foi, il me semble qu'après tout j'ai eu tort, Marquis,*" he at length observed, attempting to throw something like playfulness into his gruff voice. "*Il ne pouvait faire autrement ce jeune homme, qu'en pensez-vous?*"

The marquis shrugged his shoulders, and looked mysteriously. "*C'est possible,*" he said, but in a tone intended to convey a contrary impression; "*cependant il faut avouer que c'est une manière d'agir un peu rude.*"

De Warner felt vexed, for he was anxious, nay, it was necessary to his reputation, that De Forsac should alter his opinion. He now changed his ground.

"*Il a désavoué toute intention de m'insulter,*" he continued, "*aussi, ne vient-il pas de sauver la vie à notre amie Adeline?*"

"*Ne vient-il pas, aussi, d'oter la vie presque à votre ami De Hillier?*" returned the marquis, with significant expression.

The cuirassier could have crushed the speaker for the insinuation, but he was politic enough to dissemble, and turn the hint to his own purpose.

"*Je me décide,*" he exclaimed. "*Comme l'ami du comte, cela aurait trop l'air d'une conspiration si je l'appelle en duel. Adieu, Marquis; adieu, St. Armand.*"

The adieus were reiterated, and De Warner, taking the bridle from the man who was leading his horse outside the Boulevard, threw his heavy frame into the saddle, and galloped off towards the barracks of his regiment.

"*La grosse bête!*" said the marquis, when he was out of hearing.

"*Le sauvage Irlandais!*" added St. Armand, following him with his eye-glass.

"*Quel fanfaron! quel Gascon!*" returned the marquis, with humour, who had his own private views in

wishing to embroil De Warner with our hero; and they continued their remarks in nearly the same strain, until they finally lost sight of him in the distance.

On entering the room, where his friends were anxiously awaiting his return, the countenance of Delmaine had resumed that extreme paleness by which it was overspread previous to his altercation with De Warner, and his whole appearance indicated suffering. Miss Stanley gazed on him in silence, but Dormer earnestly inquired if he was ill. Delmaine replied to the question by a glance at his side, which was instantly comprehended.

The crowd had now nearly dispersed, and the party set out on their return to Meurice's. On reaching the corner of the Rue de la Paix, they suddenly encountered O'Sullivan, who, equally struck by the death-like paleness of our hero's features, and observing that he walked with seeming effort, abruptly exclaimed,

"Bless me, Mr. Delmaine, how ill ye look! I fear your wound has been more serious than we at first imagined."

"Wound!" hastily repeated Miss Stanley, who now spoke for the first time since the return of our hero; "what wound?—You said nothing of a wound, Mr. Dormer."

"A very slight wound indeed," said Dormer, somewhat confusedly, and fixing his eyes on O'Sullivan, in a manner which gave him to understand that he had committed an indiscretion.

"Faith, and sure as I'm alive, I have been committing a blunder," said the contrite Irishman; "but who could suppose that ye meant the thing to be kept secret?"

"It is nothing, absolutely nothing," cried Delmaine, hastening to remove the anxiety manifested by Miss Stanley in the intonations of her voice. "However, Dormer," he continued, smiling languidly, "I think I shall require a coach."

"*Appellez un fiacre,*" called Dormer to a commis-

sionaire who stood by, brandishing his brushes, and shouting at intervals "*Bottes à cirer, Messieurs !*"

The man dropped his brushes, and ran to execute the message. The party then proceeded at a slow pace, and gained the corner of the Rue St. Augustin, at the moment when the *fiacre* drew up.

"I wish ye better, Mr. Delmaine," said O'Sullivan, when the party were seated in the coach. "I am now going home, to put that little jewel in order, which ye soiled with so much effect this morning. It should have been done long ago, but for this same *fête*, which has filled my rooms, ever since my return, with a host of people; but it is never too late to do a good thing. Good morning, madam," he concluded, bowing to Miss Stanley.

They soon reached the hotel. The colonel had gone out, but the good old baronet was seated, as usual, near the fire.

"What, in the name of Heaven, is the matter with you, Clifford!" he exclaimed, half rising from his *fau-teuil*, and throwing down the newspaper as the party entered.

"Nothing my dear uncle, nothing but a little fatigue and pain. I shall soon be better."

"Mr. Dormer," inquired Miss Stanley, "do you not think it advisable to call in a surgeon?"

"A surgeon!" echoed Sir Edward; "what can we possibly want with a surgeon—a physician seems to be required in this instance."

Dormer looked at his friend. "There is no occasion for either," said the latter. "The fact is, my dear uncle," he continued, perceiving that some sort of explanation was necessary, and endeavouring to assume a tone of levity, "I did not escape altogether unhurt this morning. My adversary's ball grazed and bruised my side, producing a sensation of extraordinary pain, which had, however, wholly subsided before my return. I can only attribute my present suffering," he added, addressing Dormer, "to the circumstance of my side

having come in contact with the window of the *entresol* on my descent to the Boulevard.

Miss Stanley sighed involuntarily, for she recollected the motive which had induced him to take that somewhat dangerous leap; and, in idea, she again beheld the languid form of the fascinating Frenchwoman reclining in his arms.

"I have an infallible specific for external bruises," said Sir Edward, eagerly; "you shall have in an instant;" and he repaired to his sleeping-room in search of a small medicine chest, which, at home or abroad, was invariably the companion of his slumbers.

"Positively, I have forgotten to discharge the coach," suddenly exclaimed Dormer, who fancied that his absence might prove an infallible specific for certain *internal* bruises, which had equally been manifested.

A momentary silence succeeded to his departure.—Both Miss Stanley and our hero breathed heavily and quickly—each seemed anxious that the other should speak first, and each felt and regretted that a few moments only of private intercourse would be allowed them, at least, for the present.

"I trust I have not alarmed you, Miss Stanley," at length observed Clifford, in a low and uncertain voice.

The look which Helen turned on him might have been interpreted, "Indeed you have greatly, deeply alarmed me, and in more respects than one," while her lips pronounced, "I fear you are about to give your friends other causes for anxiety, than that of your actual condition at this moment, Mr. Delmaine."

"And am I to class *you* among the number of these friends? Do *you* feel an interest in me?" inquired our hero.

"I do," said Helen, with emotion. Then taking the hand which he had extended, "This is no moment for unworthy disguise or fastidious delicacy. Do you imagine I can so readily forget the painful occurrences of this day, or that I can behold those sufferings, which

CHAPTER IX.

TIME rolled on in the usual routine of Parisian amusements. Sir Edward and the colonel were now established in their new apartments in the Rue de la Paix, and Delmaine had taken lodgings in the hotel in which Dormer resided. The notoriety attached to his duel had been the means of introducing him to a host of people, both French and English, and invitations poured in from every quarter. To many of the more respectable families of the *ancienne noblesse*, he found easy access; and *fêted* and caressed by all, the handsome Englishman was the nine days wonder of the moment. But it was not simply for his courage or his personal beauty, that the Parisian women admired him. Delmaine spoke the French language with nearly as much facility as he spoke his own, and understanding its idiom, had at command a fund of wit and repartee, which both flattered and delighted. But the chief passport to favour was that amiability of disposition with women, to which we have already alluded, as rendering him anxious to consult the feelings and peculiarities of those he was disposed to like, even at the sacrifice of his own opinion.

"*Mais c'est impossible, vous n'êtes pas Anglais, Monsieur Delmaine.*" said the young Comtesse de Sabreuil, to him one evening, after having attentively listened to some lively sallies of his imagination, uttered at the termination of a waltz.

"*Et pourquoi pas, Madame?*" replied our hero, smiling, and affecting surprise.

"*Ious ne ressemblez en rien à vos compatriotes—Les Anglais sont toujours si tristes, si maussades. Mais vous—vous êtes absolument Français—N'est-ce pas, madame?*" she added, touching Miss Stanley, who sat near her, with her fan.

Helen smiled an affirmative, but it was that sickly smile which indicates the heart ill at ease. Since the eventful epoch of the duel, when a partial avowal of more than commonplace sentiments had escaped them, she beheld with pain the readiness with which our hero entered into the several amusements that courted him on every hand, and seemed to have been prepared expressly for him. She saw much to admire in Clifford, but she also saw much to condemn; her strong natural good sense led her to perceive the weak points of his character, but with all that weakness, there was a frankness of manner, a winning gentleness of deportment, and a generosity of feeling, which made his very failings appear as virtues; and though she remarked that, in his usual address to women, the tones of his voice were rich, melodious, and touching, while his eyes sparkled with animation; yet she also observed, that, when he addressed her, there was a subdued expression in both, that to a sensible woman was far more flattering and endearing."

Our hero, it is true, had not made any actual declaration of attachment; but a thousand little nothings, which often speak more forcibly than a mere form of words, a variety of trifling attentions, which subdue the heart before it is conscious of being assailed, and above all, the eloquent language of his gaze, had conveyed an impression to her mind which she could not but admit, arose wholly out of the conviction that he had not beheld her with indifference. Often, even amid his sallies of gayety, his eyes would lose their fire and their vivacity as they lingered on her countenance, and assume a tenderness of expression that was perfectly in unison with the play of his ever-varying features. At these moments, Helen felt, that whatever might be the charm of his conversational powers with others, the real intelligence of soul existed only, and as if by intuition, between themselves.

At one of the evening parties which he now attended, Delmaine had been introduced to the Marquis de Forsac, a nobleman, uniting many accomplishments and

powerful abilities, with the most finished elegance of manner and person. The marquis had, at an earlier period of his life, been remarkable for his beauty; and even now, although in his fortieth year; and notwithstanding the ravages dissipation had made on his fine countenance, he still retained many traces of his former self. The passions which had ever reigned predominant in his breast, were still powerful and unsubdued, and he had the peculiar talent of fascinating all whom it suited his purposes to conciliate. Beneath an air of much generosity, he, however, concealed a viciousness of heart and a selfishness of feeling, that would not have hesitated at the sacrifice of the whole world to the attainment of any particular object. During a long life of pleasure and extravagance, he had contrived to dissipate a handsome fortune, having scarcely enough left at the present moment, to keep up that appearance which was required from his rank and position in society. A refined *roué* from his earliest years, both from habit and principle, De Forsac shrank dismayed from the idea of binding himself in other chains than those which love had forged; but his increasing embarrassments led him, at length, to think seriously of forming a connexion with some rich Englishwoman, (that never-failing resource of needy men, and needy Frenchmen in particular,) whose gold could enable him to pursue the same licentious career.

With De Forsac, however, mere wealth was not a sufficient inducement to embark on the perilous ocean of matrimony. He required that the woman on whom he bestowed his name and title, should be distinguished not less for personal attractions and accomplishments, than for worldly advantages. Not that his principles could possibly lead him to prize those qualities in one whom the name of wife must have rendered odious to him, but that his self-love might be gratified by the envy and admiration of his companions and friends. His confidence in himself was unbounded, and he deemed that he had only to propose himself to any woman to

be accepted. Moving in the first circles, he had every facility of introduction; but though he hourly met with women who were both ready and willing to barter their liberty and gold for the magic sound of Madame la Marquise, De Forsac had not yet encountered one whose style he fancied such as to reflect credit upon his choice, and entitle her to that distinction. He had, however, been particularly struck by the commanding beauty of Miss Stanley on the morning of the funeral, and had too much penetration not to perceive that the superior stranger was one who had the *entrée* into the first society. The rich proportions of her person, the luxuriant masses of her dark hair, and the warm expression of her varying and animated countenance, were well calculated to produce an effect on such a man as De Forsac, and his scheming mind rapidly embraced the probability of making them his own. That she was rich he did not doubt: the air of fashion which pervaded her whole appearance was, with him, an evidence of the fact; and he resolved to embark all his energies in the pursuit of one whom he felt he could passionately love even as his wife.

He had not, however, beheld Delmaine without dismay; for although in the short colloquy which ensued between the two females and himself, he affected to treat their encomiums on his person with disdain, De Forsac was compelled secretly to admit that our hero was peculiarly formed to please, and likely to prove a most formidable rival; but when he discovered that this same individual was the being who had discomfited his friend De Hillier, his envy was excited to the highest possible pitch, though he had the address to conceal his mortification, and to treat the affair with affected levity. For a moment he endeavoured to persuade himself that he was the brother of the beautiful Englishwoman; but as he fixed his eyes for a moment on the spot where they stood, he was at once satisfied, from their manner, that *theirs* was not the relationship of brother and sister.

From this faint hope, the marquis was recalled to his

original conviction. He knew the female heart too well not to be aware that personal courage, united to strong physical attraction and pleasing manners, is ever a passport to favour. In the former he felt himself to be deficient ; and cursing the event which was likely to give much notoriety to our hero, from that moment hated him. Yet De Forsac was not a man likely to relinquish a pursuit in which he had an interest in embarking. He had too good an opinion of himself, and of those powers of pleasing which had hitherto stood unrivalled, to doubt his final success with any woman. An immediate introduction was now the chief point to be considered, and he resolved to attend every party in the metropolis, in the hope of meeting with the beautiful stranger. Fertile in expedient, his active mind suggested the policy of his forming an intimacy with our hero, whom he fancied he could succeed in detaching, at least for a time, from the object of his pursuit. A long acquaintance with the passions, had made him a ready diviner of the feelings of others, when not shrouded with that almost impenetrable veil in which he concealed his own : and in the open countenance of Clifford he fancied he read indications of passion which might be turned to his own advantage. All the wily artifice of his nature he was now resolved to summon to his aid : and with the full determination to make the beautiful Helen his wife, in spite of every obstacle, he commenced his operations.

De Forsac was not long in procuring the wished for introduction. Colonel Stanley had been provided with several letters, which, in consequence of the change in his plans, he now found extremely useful. Of a very few of these, however, he thought proper to avail himself ; and it was at a party given by the Comte de Sabreuil, that the marquis, who was particularly intimate with that nobleman, first met and was presented to Miss Stanley and her party. Here every doubt as to a more than commonplace intimacy was entirely dispelled ; and the envious De Forsac saw but too plainly, that unless

his rival could be detached from Helen by the seldom failing aid of temptation, there was no hope for him.

With a view, therefore, to this object, he attached himself to our hero ; and by the fascination of his manner, contrived to inspire him with a desire for further acquaintance. Colonel Stanley was also particularly delighted with the rich fund of wit and exhaustless stores of information, which the conversation of the marquis elicited. He had travelled much, had served in the French armies, and spoke a variety of languages with a fluency that could only be equalled by a native. With Helen he conversed on painting, music and sculpture, with all the ease and freedom of a master ; while the light and delicate manner in which he wielded the shafts of ridicule and satire, both amused and surprised her ; and she could not but admit that De Forsac was one of the most accomplished men that graced the circles of French society. Never had he appeared to greater advantage than on this evening : satisfied with the impression he had made, he returned to his hotel with as much love for Helen, as hatred for Clifford, and with a full determination to leave no art untried to sacrifice the one, and to possess the other.

A few days after this event, our hero, much to his surprise, found a note of invitation to a *bal paré*, lying on the table, which, on opening, he found to bear the signature of "Astelli." Who Astelli was, he knew not, though he had some faint recollection of the name having been introduced in the course of Dormer's narrative. Unwilling to yield to any temptation of the kind, he threw it by with a firm resolution not to avail himself of the invitation.

On the following morning, as he yet sat at breakfast, he was favoured with a visit from his new friend, the marquis, who came to inquire if he had received a card for the splendid ball to be given that evening at Madame Astelli's.

"There it is," was his reply, pointing to the note, which lay upon the mantle-piece ; "but how is it, mar-

quis, that I have been so far favoured? I have never seen this Madame Astelli, and certainly she can have no knowledge of me."

"Oh, that is easily explained," said De Forsac, smiling: "the notoriety attached to your recent affair, has made your name familiar with every circle; besides, you cannot but consider this invitation as being highly complimentary, since Astelli's cards to her *bals parés*, are always confined to men of a certain class and *ton*."

"I am extremely obliged, indeed, for the honour she is pleased to confer on me," said Delmaine; "but from what I can understand, Madame Astelli's parties are open to all the world—as much to the Chevalier d'Industrie, as to the man of rank and honour—provided her rooms are well filled, it matters not by whom, or in what manner."

"Nonsense, my dear fellow," interrupted the marquis, "you have received a false impression of the thing altogether; you may rely upon it that *en fait d'hommes* there can be nothing more select in all Paris; and as for the women, they are such as you will seldom meet with in any society, in any country in the world. Besides," he added, with an air of seriousness, "you do not imagine that I would either advise your going, or venture there myself, did I conceive the place to be at all of a doubtful character?"

This last argument staggered Delmaine, and he fancied that the high colouring given to the description of Dormer, had originated more in disappointment than in positive conviction. He thought at least there could be no harm in visiting the place once, and judging for himself; and he was on the point of yielding to the persuasions of De Forsac, when he suddenly recollected that he had promised to accompany Miss Stanley that evening to the French opera.

"I cannot possibly go this evening," he remarked, "for I now recollect that I have an engagement of two days standing."

"Some party of no consequence, I presume?" said the marquis; "you can send an apology."

"Impossible! I am engaged to accompany Colonel and Miss Stanley this evening to the opera."

The heart of De Forsac bounded within him at the intelligence; he saw that Clifford's resolution was staggered; and could he but succeed in making him break this engagement, it would, he fancied, be the first step towards the accomplishment of his object. He was prepared to expect some opposition to his proposal, and had provided himself for the occasion.

"I know," he said, taking a letter from his pocket, "that you possess too much gallantry to fail in any engagement with a lady; but what shall I say to the fair writer of this billet, or how shall I contrive to make my peace with her, for the want of success attendant on my negotiation? But read, and judge for yourself."

Clifford took the embossed paper from his hands, and read as follows:—

"*Mon cher Marquis,*

"*Il y a bal paré ce soir chez Astelli; on dit que vous êtes devenu l'ami intime du jeune Anglais, auquel je dois la vie: tâchez de l'amener avec vous: je ne puis résister plus long-temps, au désir que j'éprouve de lui témoigner toute ma reconnaissance.*

"*Votre Amie,*

"ADELINE DORJEVILLE."

"P. S. *Ne manquez pas de grâce. Envoyez votre réponse.*"

While he read this short missive, the image of the fascinating Frenchwoman arose to his mind. Again, in imagination, he beheld her reclining in his arms; again he fancied he heard the warm expressions of gratitude which had been suffered to escape her lips; and the assurance so unequivocally afforded him, that she had not ceased to recollect the circumstances under which they met, together with the conviction that it rested with himself alone to see her again that night, all tended to shake his resolution.

De Forsac watched his varying countenance, and was too well versed in the study, not to perceive how the conflict in his mind was likely to terminate.

"Well, what am I to say?" he demanded, carelessly. "Do you accompany the Stanleys, whom you see every day, and every moment of your life, or do you yield to the prayers of one who seems to be dying to pour forth the effusions of a grateful heart? Recollect, this may be the only opportunity you will have of seeing her, for she talks of accompanying her mother, Madame Dorjeville, into the south."

"Her mother?" repeated Clifford, with surprise.—"You do not mean to say that the person who was with her on the day of the accident, is her mother?"

"The same," replied the marquis. "I knew Colonel Dorjeville intimately; his wife was once what her daughter is now."

"But she has another child," observed our hero; "has she not—a child about five or six years of age?"

"Yes—a child that was born about three months after her husband's death. But why do you ask? I thought you were an utter stranger to Madame Dorjeville?"

"I travelled in the diligence with her from Calais," said Clifford; "our acquaintance is limited to that."

"What!" exclaimed De Forsac, "are you the young Englishman to whom Madame Dorjeville was indebted for assistance, when she was so unfortunate as to lose her purse?"

"The same; but, may I inquire in my turn, how you became acquainted with that trifling circumstance?"

"Ah!" replied De Forsac, "the gratitude of a woman's heart will always burst forth into generous expression. You must positively go; Madame Dorjeville is dying to behold you once more—you, who have more than ever secured her gratitude by the gallant manner in which you preserved her daughter's life. *A propos*," he resumed, after a short pause, "have you heard any thing from Capitaine De Warner, whom you so uncer-

moniously rolled in the dust? I believe you gave him your card?" and De Forsac's penetrating eye was fastened upon the countenance of Delmaine as he spoke.

"Not a word," said our hero. "I waited at home several mornings, in the expectation of a message, but none arrived, and the period is now gone past."

"*Le poltron*," muttered the marquis, half aside, and involuntarily, "but what shall I say?" he added, going to the *secrétaire*, and taking up a pen. "Must I inform Mademoiselle Dorjeville that she is doomed to lose all the anticipated pleasure of the evening, or shall I say that her *preux chevalier Anglais*, is ready to do homage to those charms which, but for him, would have been at this moment mouldering in the *Père la Chaise*."

"Well, I suppose I must go," said Clifford; "but how shall I excuse myself to the Stanleys?"

"Write a note," replied De Forsac, "and my servant shall drive my cab round, and leave it at the porter's lodge, after he has been to Adeline with my billet."

"But they will think it singular that I do not call myself," resumed our hero.

"You can say," returned the marquis, "that you are just setting off for St. Cloud with some friends; for, by the way, I have such an engagement in view for you. We shall meet two or three young men, dine early, and return in good time to dress."

To this Delmaine assented, and De Forsac, now satisfied that he had gained his point, filled up the interval between the departure and return of his cabriolet, with rich, but not fulsome encomiums on the beauty of the young female, obscurely hinting, at the same time, that it depended altogether on our hero to improve the advantage he already possessed over a thousand less fortunate rivals.

On the return of the servant, Delmaine had completed his toilet for the morning, and they now issued forth on their new expedition. At the bottom of the staircase they met Dormer. De Forsac, who had not been regardless of the intimacy between the young men,

had too much penetration not to perceive the friendly Mentorship which the one was suffered to exercise over the other. He now dreaded an interruption to his project. From the first introduction of Dormer to De Forsac, a sort of jealous defiance and distrust had subsisted on either side, which was, however, never otherwise manifested than in the studied politeness of their manner, and the involuntary and haughty drawing back of their persons, whenever they came unavoidably in contact with each other.

"What, Delmaine, going out already?" inquired his friend, with an air of disappointment at seeing him in the society of the marquis.

"Off to St. Cloud, where we intend dining. Will you join us, Dormer?"

"Impossible," was the stiff reply. "I am engaged to dine in town; but you will, of course, be back in time for the French opera. You know we have engaged ourselves to the Stanleys."

"I am afraid not," stammered Clifford, a slight flush crimsoning his cheek as he remarked the look of disappointment and surprise with which his friend regarded him.

"And why?" demanded Dormer, still keeping his eye intently fixed on him.

"Because I have another, and a very particular engagement for this evening, and I have sent an apology to the Stanleys."

"Because you have another and a very particular engagement, and you have sent an apology to the Stanleys!" repeated Dormer, sarcastically.

Not less vexed at the reproach tacitly conveyed in the repetition of his words, than at the satirical smile which played upon the features of the marquis, who stood during this short colloquy, tapping his boot with his slight whalebone cane, and half humming a trifling popular air of the day, Delmaine grew angry.

"Mr. Dormer," he exclaimed, hastily, "I presume I am at liberty to form my own engagements, without

consulting the opinions of others on the question of their propriety or impropriety."

"Most assuredly, Mr. Delmaine," proudly rejoined his friend; then bowing stiffly, and noticing the marquis simply by that haughty drawing back of his person, to which we have already alluded, he turned on his heel, and ascended to his apartment.

A feeling of shame and bitter regret stole across the mind of our hero; he felt that he was wrong, and was about to follow and apologize, when the impulse was suddenly checked by an observation from De Forsac. The latter had watched the progress of this little misunderstanding with deep interest, though the outward air of carelessness which he had assumed, would have led any one to imagine that he had been studiously contriving to avoid listening to the conversation. Here was another and an unexpected opening to the accomplishment of his plans. Could he succeed in subverting the influence of Dormer, by arousing the angry feelings of Delmaine, he had no doubt of his eventual success; but the point was to do this with address; and in such a manner as would most affect him—namely, through the medium of his *amour-propre*.

"You certainly have an excellent Mentor," he observed, as soon as they were seated in the cabriolet; "it must be delightful to have a friend of one's own age, ever ready and willing to give one advice. For my part, however, I hate advice where I do not ask it—*c'est fort gênant, et surtout devant une troisième personne.*"

This was touching the sensitive chord. Had his friend remonstrated in private on the subject, Clifford could have borne any observation; but to be thus taken to task before a third person, was what his pride and high feeling could not endure. The satirical smile of De Forsac seemed to insinuate—in fact, had been meant to say—that he considered him in leading-strings, and such a supposition he could not brook for an instant.

"Dormer is by no means my Mentor," he replied ; 'but as a very old friend and companion, he thinks he is justified in using the language of expostulation. In act, it is to his representations that you are to attribute my extreme reluctance to visit Astelli's."

"Then I will stake my existence he has lost his money there," said De Forsac. "I never yet knew a man who was unfortunate in any one of these houses, who did not abuse them all indiscriminately afterwards."

Delmaine could not deny this, and began once more to think that much of Dormer's prejudice against these establishments had arisen out of his repeated losses.

"I believe he has been unfortunate," was his reply ; "but latterly he has given up these haunts entirely, and his advice to me has been the result of his own experience, and his sincere interest in my happiness."

"Well," returned De Forsac, "it may be all very proper and very kind to warn one of the rock on which we have foundered ourselves ; but to compel one to steer a particular course in despite of our own wishes and judgment, is, it must be confessed, somewhat arbitrary."

Delmaine said nothing, although he thought so too. Still his mind was ill at ease ; he had broken his engagement with the Stanleys ; he had offended his friend by his warmth, and he was about to enter into a scene which he had understood was covered with roses, but beneath which lurked a thousand thorns ; and he felt, as he rolled rapidly towards St. Cloud, that that evening was to decide the happiness or misery of his future existence.

After sauntering about for a few hours in the park and garden, they sat down, with two other young men, officers of the guard, to an early dinner. The conversation turning on the reigning beauties of the day, one of the strangers, a cousin of De Forsac, happened to mention Adeline Dorjeville, to whom he alluded in terms *un peu leste*, when the marquis, catching his eye, gave him to understand, by his peculiar glance, that he

wished the subject to be discontinued. The officer instantly took the hint, and spoke of some other woman, then a favourite of the moment. Clifford, who had not been unobservant of the circumstance, felt pained at the remarks that had been made, but said nothing.

On their return to Paris, Delmaine inquired of his servant, a long-trying domestic of his father's, if Mr. Dormer had left a message for him. His chagrin was great when informed that he had not; he proceeded to his toilet with a heavy heart, and one of those gloomy forebodings of evil by which the human imagination is so often and so unaccountably assailed. During the whole of the day he had flattered himself with the hope that Dormer would not have cherished his resentment beyond the passing moment, and that a card, or some slight document, would have been left in his absence, as a testimonial of the fact. He would willingly have retreated if he could; and even the inconsistency of breaking his promise with De Forsac would, in all probability, have had little effect in deterring him, had Dormer been there to strengthen him in his resolution, or had he not actually sent his apology to the Stanleys. In the midst of these gloomy reflections, the marquis suddenly entered, brilliant in fashion, and unusually animated.

"What!" he exclaimed, "in a brown study, and looking as if you were going to be hanged, when the brightest eyes in the world are languishing to behold you? Come, cheer up, my dear fellow, and let your countenance wear any other expression than this, if you wish to make an impression on Adeline."

The very name of Adeline had a singular fascination for Clifford, who was no sooner recalled to a sense of the pleasure which actually awaited him, than his features brightened up, and he replied, with a smile—

"I was not aware of having been in a brown study; but if so, it has arisen, I presume, from the ennui of remaining so long in expectation of your arrival."

The marquis had too much penetration to believe a

word of this, but he had also too much tact and judgment to suffer the shadow of a contrary impression to appear.

"By the by," he said, as they were about to depart, and suddenly putting his hand into his pocket, "I must beg you to wait a moment, until I send to my lodgings for my purse, which I have forgotten. Shall I ring for my servant?" he added, approaching the bell.

"By no means," returned Delmaine; "I can supply you with what you want."

"Well, it will save time," rejoined De Forsac, "and I can return it to you to-morrow. Let me see: I suppose there will be a little play to-night, and I shall be obliged to have a few Napoleons; let me have fifty."

"Are you sure that will be enough?" said Clifford, handing him a five hundred franc-note and a *rouleau* of gold.

"Oh, plenty," rejoined De Forsac; "I never play high, and here is much more than I shall feel inclined to risk this evening."

CHAPTER IX.

IT was late when De Forsac's cabriolet whirled round from the Boulevard into the Rue Grammont. The *portecochère* of Astelli's hôtel was crowded with carriages of all descriptions, and the noise and confusion which prevailed among the groups of coachmen and servants, gave every indication of a numerous party. Alighting from their vehicle, the marquis and our hero ascended to the large and splendidly lighted anti-room, at the further extremity of which, a well-dressed man sat, to receive certain contributions levied on the visitors. With this individual the marquis deposited two cards of invi-

tation and a Napoleon; then, passing through a second and smaller apartment, he led the way through two spacious folding doors into the dancing room.

Nothing could surpass the magnificence of the scene. A flood of light seemed to burst from the rich crystal lustres, which studded the walls of the gilded apartments, and were reflected from the splendid mirrors filling up the intervals between each, multiplying objects into almost infinitude. Glittering in jewels, covered with plumes, adorned in all the elegance of Parisian costume, a hundred fine and voluptuous forms arrested the eye in quick succession. A few German and Italian women who could readily be distinguished—the former by the rich fulness of their proportions, the latter by the almost overpowering lustre of their eyes—were among the number; the remainder were almost exclusively French, and from every province, from the blood-ex-citing plains of the south, to the more frigid regions of the north. The men were of almost every country. French, English, Russians, Spaniards, Italians, Germans, and Portuguese, composed the throng; and many of these, with the exception of the English, wore some decoration pending from their breasts.

At the moment when De Forsac and Clifford appeared at the entrance, many of the party were seated on the crimson velvet ottomans which lined the apartments, conversing in small groups, or watching the figure of the waltz, which, as usual, had just succeeded to the quadrille; others lingered around in indolent attitudes, or sauntered to and from the card-rooms at the opposite extremity. Among the waltzers, Clifford remarked the cousin of De Forsac, with whom he had dined.

The face of his partner was averted from him at the moment, but he fancied that he knew the form. He was not wrong. In the next instant, he recognised Adeline Dorjeville, and as she rapidly approached in the whirling figure of the dance, he sought to catch her eye. She passed, however, without seeing him. The action of the waltz had given a rich glow to her counte-

nance, and he watched the elegant and voluptuous movements of her person through the figure, until his heart thrilled with deep emotion, and his eyes sparkled with a mingled expression of admiration and languor.

In a few moments Adeline again approached; she looked up, and the eyes of Delmaine met hers. In an instant the blood receded from her cheek; she half reclined her head on the arm of her partner, and, discontinuing the dance, was conducted to her seat.

De Forsac, who had attentively watched the countenance of our hero from the first moment of their entrance, saw him change colour, and he already gloried in the anticipation of his success.

"Shall I introduce you now," he observed, carelessly, "or shall I wait until she gets better? Something has affected her."

"By all means introduce me, and without delay," urged Clifford, impatiently.

They crossed the room. Adeline saw them approach, and again her cheek flushed high. "*Permettez, Mademoiselle Dorjeville, que je vous présente mon ami intime, Monsieur Delmaine,*" said the marquis.

Adeline and Clifford both bowed, and as their eyes met, there was an eloquence of expression that must have rendered any attempt at language vain. They were silent.

In a few minutes De Forsac withdrew to the other side of the room; when the young female, in a tone of mingled vivacity and tenderness, began to express her gratitude and thanks for the service Clifford had rendered her. "Oh, how much I feared that you would not come this evening," she added. "I have been counting the very minutes during the last hour, and they seemed interminable: how," she concluded, "shall I confess what I felt at the moment, when my fears were entirely dissipated by your presence?"

Clifford had remarked that effect. He had seen her turn pale as death from the light mazes of the waltz, and he fancied that he was beloved:—his cheek glow-

ed high—his eye was dimmed with passion—he thought not once of the singularity of such a confession, from one so young and so beautiful; but as he gazed on her fascinating countenance, he suffered his judgment to be subdued into the belief that, as he was loved for himself alone, to him exclusively such language could ever be addressed from those lips.

“Shall we walk?” pursued Adeline, observing that the eyes of many of the company were fixed upon her companion, who had been recognised by some of the party as the opponent of De Hillier—a fact that soon became generally known throughout the *salon*.

Delmaine, though somewhat reluctantly, rose, and giving his arm, suffered himself to be conducted into the card-rooms. There another blaze of light flashed on the view, while round the several tables were to be seen confused groups of men and women, deeply interested in the progress of the game. Near one of these our hero lingered for a few minutes. A young Englishman, and a woman of commanding features, sparkling with diamonds, and ornamented with waving plumes, held the cards. Before them, on the table, lay gold and notes in profusion, the stakes of the several betters, who formed a dense mass around the players, scarcely allowing them room to move. The betters for the Englishman were chiefly Spaniards and his own countrymen. Those for the female were almost entirely French. Her score was four, while her adversary, whose deal it was, had only marked one; and the countenances of both parties were regulated by the state of their respective games. The Englishman dealt, and as his opponent took up her cards, a look of triumphant success was exchanged among her supporters. Perfectly cool and practised in the game, she, however, suffered no indication of hope or fear to escape her; but turning to a tall, dark man near her, calmly inquired, more with a view to deceive her adversary, than to obtain information—

"Qu'en pensez-vous, Monsieur le Commandant ? Faut-il proposer ?"

"Du tout, Madame," replied the other, in an equally calm tone ; *"il faut jouer."*

Knave, ace, and nine of trumps, and king and queen of another suit, composed her hand. Those around her would have staked their fortunes on the issue—she played the knave.

"Je marque le roi," said her adversary, winning at the same time with the king. He then played the knave of her second suit—she won it with the queen ; then played the king of the same, in order to keep the *ten-âce* in trumps. A small card was thrown away upon it ; and as she had now two tricks, with ace, and nine of trumps left, the game seemed no longer doubtful—she showed her cards, while an eager hand was extended from behind her to grasp the heaps of gold on the opposite side.

"Un instant, Monsieur," said the young Englishman, arresting his movement ; then addressing his opponent, *"Play, madam, if you please."*

"By all means, if you wish it," she replied, in the purest English possible ; *"but I should think it useless."*

She played the ace, he won it with the queen, and, to the surprise and dismay of the opposite party, showed the ten.

The passions of hope and fear now changed sides in an instant ; the score of the Englishman was, in consequence of his being forced and marking the king, quite equal to that of his adversary. One consolation—nay, almost certainty, remained to the opposite party—it was the lady's deal. She took up the cards, and as she put them together, fixed her eyes upon the Englishman, and, complimenting him in his own language on his knowledge of the game, drew his attention entirely from the board.

"Mêlez bien les cartes," whispered a voice in his ear, as she presented the pack to be cut.

The young man took up the cards with an affected air of distraction, and continued to shuffle them for a moment, as he replied to her compliment.

The countenances of the adverse party became suddenly clouded, and several of the men ground their teeth, and evinced every symptom of rage and disappointment. Even the polite player herself seemed vexed, for she observed, with evident pique—

“You will certainly wear out the cards if you continue to shuffle them in that manner.”

“I dare say Madame Astelli will supply us with others,” said the Englishman.

The cards were now cut, the usual number dealt, and the hearts of several, who had staked very large sums, beat high with expectation. The dealer slowly turned up the corner of the trump card, as if fearful to ascertain the result. “*C'est le roi*,” said a voice behind her: “*nous avons gagnés*,” shouted others, and their countenances again brightened. The card was finally turned and thrown upon the table—it was the queen, and again they were dismayed.

The Englishman took up his hand; he looked at the first card, the second, the third, the fourth. They were all small ones, without a trump—the hopes of his party died away; their anxious countenances betrayed little chance of success; and their adversaries, who had devoured their features with their eyes, were filled with the conviction of their success. The Englishman rose to yield his seat to another, and as he did so, one of the opposite betters turned the remaining card in a sort of wild triumph—it was the king of trumps. The fury of the opposite party was now extreme; some stamped violently—others uttered exclamations of despair—and as they beheld the Englishman distributing the wealth, which they had an instant before considered as their own, they secretly cursed him and his good fortune, in all the bitterness of their hearts. Some, to give their passion full vent, began to abuse the individual of their own party, who had turned up the last card, and in this they all speedily joined. Women, glit-

tering in jewels, and men covered with ribbands, were alike loud in their clamours against his interference.

"*Que diable voulez-vous,*" he replied, in nearly as great a state of excitement as themselves; "*qui aurait pensé que ce maudit roi y fut caché, aussi n'ai-je pas assez perdu moi-même?*"

No one could deny this, for his stake, next to that of the player, had been the largest; and, after a little time, the party were soothed into something like calmness, though by far the greater part of the high betters had retired in disgust and disappointment at their loss.

"Who is that lady?" observed Clifford, conducting his companion to an ottoman, as the female rose to vacate her seat for the next player.

"That," said Adeline, "is the Princesse de S——. *Il n'arrive pas souvent qu'elle perd,*" she continued, significantly.

"How!" said our hero, in a tone of surprise, and without paying particular attention to the latter part of her remark; "the Princesse de S—— at Madame Astelli's parties?"

"Even so," rejoined Adeline, smiling; "but do not look so completely the image of astonishment. It is not the Princesse de S——, whose beauty is so much the subject of remark in all the higher Parisian circles, and of whom you doubtless have heard, but a *ci-devant chère amie* of the prince—*Elle n'en porte que le nom,*" she concluded.

"And how does she presume to do that," inquired Delmaine, "when another not only claims, but enjoys the distinction?"

"Oh, that is the custom here," replied his companion; "you have only to look around you, to see fifty rich and beautiful women, who have never been married, and yet they are saluted and known, one as Madame la Marquise this, and another as Madame la Baronne that, and Madame la Comtesse the other; these are little appropriations, arising out of past or present *liaisons*, and are courteously acknowledged by both

men and women. They give an air of greater *ton* and respectability to these little *réunions*, and pass current in every society of this description."

Delmaine listened in silent amazement ; he knew not what most to be surprised at—the nature of the information thus obtained, or the cool, indifferent, and matter-of-course like manner in which it was communicated.

"And are all the women here of that description?" he inquired ; "are all without any other claim to respect, than that which is accorded them by the caprice of society?"

Adeline coloured, as he fixed his penetrating yet softened gaze on her countenance. "Oh, by no means," she continued, laughing, and recovering herself ; "here are many women who have a legal claim to respectability, if you mean that ; but they are, for the most part, women of a certain age, who, having exhausted every pleasure at home, have recourse to the never-ceasing stimulus of play. These women could not exist without their *bouillotte* twice a week, and their *écarté* every night. They are often accompanied by their daughters, and these—"

She paused, as if unwilling to conclude a sentence, into which she had been involuntarily led by the chain of her remarks.

"And *these*," repeated Delmaine, waiting for the termination with evident impatience.

"And *these*," said Adeline, again colouring, and dropping her eyes, "often meet with agreeable men—suffer their senses to be subdued by the intoxicating influence of the surrounding scene—inhalé the breath of incipient passion, and are lost."

Clifford saw her tremble ; her large, dark-fringed eyes were nearly closed ; his own, filled with tenderness and passion, were fixed on her fascinating countenance ; he pressed the arm which still lingered on his ; the fair soft hand of the young girl replied to that pressure.

"*Je vous adore*," he murmured, in tones subdued

to a whisper. Adeline unclosed her eyes ; a smile of unspeakable softness played upon her features.

" *Est-ce vrai ?* " she scarcely breathed,—"*est-ce bien vrai ?—oh, oui, je le crois.*"

Delmaine was deeply excited ; he looked up for a moment, to regain self-command ;—had abasilisk appeared before him, he could not have felt more dismayed, than by the sight of the object his eyes now encountered. Standing near the card-table, with folded arms, and eyes intently fixed on himself and his companion, he beheld Dormer.

" *Qu'avez-vous donc ?* " tenderly inquired Adeline, almost terrified at the sudden start he had given ; "*êtes-vous indisposé ?*"

But the charm which lately lingered in the accents of her voice was gone ; the illusion, at least for the moment, was dispelled ; he saw her not now with the eyes of impassioned tenderness, for he felt that consciousness of error, which not only sinks us in our own estimation, but makes us often hate those by whom it is produced.

He coolly, yet politely, observed, " That he had been affected by a sudden spasm, but that it was passed."

When he looked again, the spot where his friend had been standing the instant before was vacant ; a feeling of disappointment rushed across his mind, and he felt angry with Dormer, with himself, and with the whole world. He was, however, resolved to speak to him.

Turning to excuse himself to Adeline, he was struck by the extreme paleness of her cheek, and the air of sadness and mortified feeling which overshadowed her features. She turned her eyes upon him for a moment ; they were dimmed with rising tears, and their expression was that of silent and gentle reproach.

Could Clifford endure this. His warm, his generous nature, shrunk from the idea of giving pain to any woman—how much more, to one so gentle and so beautiful as the being before him !

" What is the matter ? " he exclaimed, impetuously,

all his former feeling rushing with ten-fold violence on his heart ; “ say, what is the matter ? ”

The colour came again into her cheek—the shadows which had an instant lingered over her fair countenance, vanished like dew before the sun ; she smiled through her tears, and raised her eyes to his.

“ Nothing,” she replied ; “ I only thought that you spoke harshly to me, and that idea was sufficient in itself to give me pain.”

“ Give you pain ! ” emphatically returned Clifford : “ I would rather die than give you pain ; my thoughts were wandering at the moment, and I knew not what I said.”

“ Say no more,” murmured Adeline, “ I am satisfied ; but let us walk a little.”

Rising from the ottoman, they passed through the suite of card-rooms, every table in which was surrounded in the manner already described ; Delmaine looked on every hand for his friend, but he was nowhere to be seen. He went into the ball-room, but there he met with no better success. Unable to overcome the gloom and disappointment which continued to assail him, he sought to forget them in the excitement of the waltz.—In this he was more fortunate, for as he felt the yielding form of his partner blend itself as it were with his own, while his encircling arm embraced the full contour of her person, the rich perfume of her breath playing upon his burning cheek, every thing, save the pleasure of the moment—the certainty of present happiness—was forgotten.

The waltz concluded, they lounged again into the card-room, Clifford looking vainly on every hand to discover his friend among the crowd.

“ *A propos*,” suddenly exclaimed his companion, “ you have not yet been presented to the lady of the house.”

They moved towards a card-table at the further extremity of the room. De Forsac, and the tall, dark man, already alluded to as one of the betters for the *soi-disant*

Princesse de S——, were the players. On a low ottoman near the table sat a female elegantly attired, resplendent in diamonds, and other rich ornaments. Her complexion wore the rich hues peculiar to the daughters of Italy. Her eyes were dark, large, and sparkling; a tiara of diamonds and other precious stones encircled her brow, and imperfectly confined the rich masses of her jet black hair. A splendid dress of white satin, bordered with jewels that sparkled in the light like myriads of small stars, rather developed than concealed the full beauty of her form, while a chain of brilliants encircled her neck, terminated by a small diamond cross, which lingered on her bosom, rendering its fairness even more fair by the contrast; a small mother-of-pearl basket, filled with counters, a tablet of the same material, and a gold pencil-case, lay at her side. As they approached, she arose, and, bending her fine form for a moment over the table, while she extended an arm moulded with the utmost symmetry, and of a dazzling whiteness, dropped a mother-of-pearl fish from her delicate fingers.

“Who is that superb woman?” cried Delmaine, unable to suppress his admiration and surprise.

“Superb!” echoed his companion, with something like disappointment; “that is Madame Astelli herself”—she pursued, after a slight pause—“but I must introduce you.”

Still hanging on the arm of our hero, she now approached, and whispered something in the ear of their hostess. Astelli immediately turned her large and eloquent eyes upon him with a look of anxious interest, and received his compliments with a mingled grace, dignity, and sweetness, that astonished him. He had expected to see a woman advanced in years, and of uncourteous bearing; but here was one whose manner, carriage, style, and beauty, would have graced a drawing-room, even amid the brightest galaxy of fashion and aristocracy.

While he yet lingered indolently on the ottoman on

which he had thrown himself at the side of Adeline, and suffered his eye to wander over the various groups, whose chief study seemed to be pleasure, whose whole existence excitement, he saw Madame Astelli again approach a different card-table with her little basket of ivory counters—she dropped one among the heap which already lay before one of the players, who, having lost the game, was in the act of moving from his seat.

"*Cela fait dix passes, Monsieur,*" she remarked, gracefully inclining her head as she spoke.

"*Mais non, Madame,*" was the reply; "*je n'ai passé que neuf fois.*"

"*Pardonnez-moi, Monsieur, je les ai bien comptées, et je vous assure que vous avez passé dix fois,*" she mildly observed.

"*Mais, Madame, vous vous trompez; je répète que je n'ai passé que neuf fois.*"

"*Cela suffit, Monsieur; n'en parlons plus,*" was the calm reply. The voice had betrayed the player to be Monsieur De Warner, though his huge frame was hid from Clifford by the dense crowd of men and women by whom he was surrounded.

"*Quel scène!*" observed a lady at the table; "*comment pouvez-vous faire tant de tracas pour une passe, Capitaine?*"

"*Je ne fais pas de tracas, Madame, mais je n'aime pas qu'on me trompe,*" he gruffly observed, offering a Napoleon to the hostess. Astelli received the gold, gave him two francs in return, sighed, withdrew to her seat, and reclined her head for a moment on her hand.

"What is the meaning of all this?" inquired our hero, who had heard the discussion, and witnessed the exchange of money, without being able to comprehend the scene.

"Ah, this collecting of *passes* is the most disagreeable part of the whole affair," replied his companion. "*Les hommes de bon ton les paient toujours sans discuter—mais pour les autres—*"

"What, and do you not consider De Warner *un homme de bon ton*?" inquired Clifford, eagerly.

"*Je l'ai en horreur*: he was an officer in the regiment of cuirassiers which my father commanded, and as such, being intimate with mamma, he sometimes speaks to me; but I dislike him, personally, beyond measure."

Clifford thought he liked Adeline more than ever at that moment. "But let me understand," he pursued, "the secrets of these *passes*."

"In the first place," said his companion, "you must know that all these establishments are supported by certain contributions; or how could the proprietors indemnify themselves for the expenses incurred in wax-lights, cards, and refreshments? Most of them receive company every evening, and on those nights which are not distinguished by any particular preparation or great assemblage of persons, the *passes* are fixed at half a franc. It is true that no great profit can arise from so small a remuneration for cards and lights, a glass of *eau sucrée*, or lemonade, yet it does remunerate them; and so necessary is the presence of company to those whom habit has rendered slaves to society, that they would rather even sustain a trifling loss than not have them at all. To these *réunions* all the frequenters of the several *salons* have the *entrée* without ceremony; but, two nights in the week, it is usual to pay the compliment of a regular invitation, when both ladies and gentlemen are expected to appear *en costume de bal*, whether there is a ball or not. On these occasions, as the assembly is usually very numerous, many card-tables are set out, and the *passes* are fixed at a franc, which, as the game occupies but a very short space of time, accumulates to a large sum, and often produces from five to six hundred francs—an amount sufficient to defray the expenses of the evening, and to leave a very fair profit. It is true there is always an excellent supper, but that is paid for by the gentlemen, who deposit five francs each with a person placed in the *anti-chambre* for the purpose of receiving the entrance money."

"I rather think De Forsac paid a Napoleon for us both," observed Clifford.

"Yes, because here the supper is always ten francs, exclusive of fine wines; but Astelli's parties are of the first-rate order, and a greater degree of luxury and splendour reigns throughout her apartments, than in those of any other *propriétaire* in Paris. On ordinary occasions the *passes* here are a franc, and this insures a more select society, for there are many persons not exactly admissible, who do, however, contrive to get admitted. These shrink from the idea of paying a franc for a *passé*, when elsewhere they are charged but half that amount, and make their selection accordingly."

"Even, I suppose," interrupted our hero, "when each *passé* is the means of bringing them in large sums obtained by their bets?"

"Precisely so," she proceeded; "but there is a closeness, an avidity of gain, so deeply engrafted in the minds of many of these people, that they cannot refrain from coveting *sous*, even while they are filling their purses with *billets de banque*. On gala nights, here we are almost secure from these intrusions; for independently of the fact of its being considered *peu convenable* to appear without an invitation, the very circumstance of the *passes* being at two francs, would, in itself, be sufficient to deter them."

"How happens it then," remarked Clifford, "that where the society is so select as you describe it to be, such shameful discussions as that we have just witnessed, should arise?"

"These are by no means usual here, though not unfrequent elsewhere," she observed; "but the fact is, that *monstre d'homme* conducts himself like a bear on all occasions: and you may see that Astelli is not used to such scenes, from the manner in which she seems to feel it."

Delmaine glanced at the dark cheek of his hostess: she caught and understood the expression of his eye, and smiling faintly, as she disclosed a set of beautiful

teeth, seemed to say, even as plainly as language could convey the impression, "I feel your sympathy, and am grateful for the interest you take in my behalf."

"These," continued Adeline, "are almost the only *tracasseries* to which they are subject. In every other sense, the life of Astelli, like the lives of several others, is one continued round of pleasure and excitement; moreover, in common with most of the women you see here, she is in perfectly easy circumstances as far as relates to property."

"How strange, then," observed our hero, "that, possessed of independence, as you describe her to be, she should seek to increase it by means which are certainly not the most respectable."

"By no means strange," returned Adeline; "how else could she contrive to keep up this splendid establishment, and assemble at stated periods within her *salons*, all that is most beautiful and attractive in Paris among the women—all that is most fashionable and wealthy among the men? Moreover, in what society can the laws of decorum be more scrupulously observed? Astelli, likewise, is fond of play herself, and the profits arising from her parties, are almost universally swallowed up at the card-tables of her friends; and thus it is with most of these proprietors: they speculate upon their profits, but do not suffer themselves to touch any part of their immediate incomes. Each attends the *soirées* of the other, and they are not unfrequently the highest betters in the room. They have, however, another object in view, and that is to procure recruits. All are invariably provided with cards of address, and whenever they see a young man, whose appearance indicates fashion and wealth, they do not fail to enter into conversation with him, present him with an address, and solicit his attendance at some particular *soirée* of their own, already previously determined on. There are no less than a dozen of these people now in the room; and I can tell, from the manner in which that

lady regards you, that she has already set you down for her next party."

As she spoke, she pointed to a soft-eyed, dark woman, of good figure, who was then playing at one of the nearest tables, and whom Clifford had repeatedly remarked directing her eyes towards him, while she occasionally addressed herself to a gentleman near her with the air of one who asks for information.

In a few minutes she relinquished her seat, paid her *passes*, and, approaching Adeline, whispered something in her ear.

"Monsieur Delmaine," said the young girl, looking archly aside at him, "*permettez que je vous présente Madame Bourdeaux.*"

Our hero bowed, Madame Bourdeaux curtsied low—made some observation about the party—inquired how long he had been in Paris—declared that she would be enchanted to see him—drew a card from her case, and observing that she gave a *bal paré* twice a week, expressed a hope that he would honour her with his presence on the following Wednesday. Delmaine took the card, promised to do himself the pleasure, and Madame Bourdeaux retired to a distant part of the room, where she was introduced to another gentleman in the same manner, gave the same invitation, and then quietly sat herself down at the first *écarté* table, when she again commenced betting and playing.

"This then is the matter of course sort of way in which these things are managed?" observed our hero, inquiringly.

"Precisely so," returned his companion; "and thus you may judge of all. I knew, half an hour ago, that Madame Bourdeaux had a design upon you; but beware," she added, while her large eyes were raised to his with an expression of irresistible softness, "beware of consequences: Madame Bourdeaux is notorious for her *penchant pour les beaux hommes*, and she has just whispered in my ear that she finds you infinitely to her liking."

Clifford's reply was prevented by the approach of De Forsac, who asked if he would occupy the place he had just quitted at an *écarté* table.

"I know nothing of the game," he remarked; "I never even saw it played before to-night."

"No matter," said De Forsac, "Mademoiselle Dorjeville and I will instruct you. I wish you would oblige me," he continued, observing the evident reluctance of our hero. "I have lost a good deal of money, and depend upon you to retrieve it for me."

"And why depend on me, who am quite a novice at the game?"

"It is precisely because you are a novice at it, that I do depend upon you. I never yet knew a man, ignorant of play, who was not sure to win."

"*Essayez*," whispered Adeline, in the same soft tones of voice, "*et je vous donnerai des conseils*."

This immediately decided him. He approached the table, Adeline took a chair at one side, while the marquis seated himself at the other.

Our hero found himself opposed to the Princesse de S——, who most graciously presented the cards to him to cut for the deal, at the same time making some remark, in English, on the almost certainty she felt of being beaten.

"*Mélez bien les cartes ; sa politesse est dangereuse*," whispered Adeline.

Clifford did as he was desired, although unable to account for the caution, and in a few minutes his adversary relinquished her seat to another player, who was also beaten. Fortune seemed to smile upon our hero, who had a decided *veine* in his favour. Madame de S——, whose stakes were extremely high, entered several times against him, but without effect: he turned or marked the king almost every time. De Forsac had not only retrieved his losses, but was now a winner of a large sum, and he advised Clifford, whose winnings were also large, to imitate his example and increase his stakes. Delmaine followed his counsel; he had passed fourteen

times, and he now threw nearly all his winnings on the table. Irritated at their losses, and filled with the hope of retrieving, in one game, what had been lost in many, their opponents eagerly seized the opportunity for covering the stakes. The tall, dark man, previously alluded to, held the cards for them, and it was our hero's turn to deal.

His adversary took up his hand, and after looking cautiously over it, said, "*Je demande des cartes, Monsieur.*"

"*Combien, Monsieur?*" was the question.

"*Une carte,*" replied the other, taking at the same time what appeared to be a single card from his hand, and placing it carefully on the table.

Clifford felt his knee touched by that of Adeline at the moment, in such a manner as to satisfy him that it was intended for an admonitory or precautionary signal. He turned to ascertain the motive, but as she had no stake down, she was not at liberty to speak—she merely looked at him, and then glanced significantly towards the cards which his adversary had thrown down: Clifford took the hint. "How many have you discarded?" he inquired of his opponent.

"One card," was the reply.

Delmaine said nothing, but taking from his hand the cards which he intended to throw away, contrived so to place them on the table, that in the act his arm came in contact with the *écart* of his adversary. This unexpected movement disclosed two cards instead of one.

The adverse party looked disappointed; and the smile which had only the instant before illuminated the fallow countenance of the *Commandant*, a title by which he had been addressed, was succeeded by a frown.

"How is this, sir?" inquired our hero, fixing his eyes upon him. "Here are two cards—I thought you had discarded but one?"

"It was a mistake," answered the *Commandant*, "you must deal again."

The mistake was soon explained by the accidental

exposé of his hand, which was found to consist of the king and four other trumps. Clifford had originally given him six cards: the king, and four other trumps, and the king of another suit. As playing with six cards would inevitably have led to a detection of the error, and compromised the almost certainty he entertained of marking three points in the game, it was, of course, necessary to discard a low trump, in order to rid himself of this troublesome sixth card. Placing one completely over the other, he had contrived to make two appear as one—a *ruse* in which he was, however, soon detected by the quick eye of Adeline, who had watched the movement.

It was evident to Delmaine that there was something more than mere accident in this circumstance, and the recollection of all that Dormer had said to him on the subject flashed across his mind. With this came other thoughts, and other impressions, which induced feelings of regret and shame, and he longed for the termination of the game. Scarcely knowing how he played, or what he played, his good fortune still attended him, and he won the *partie*, without his adversary being able to score a single point. Very large sums had been staked against De Forsac and himself, and these were now pocketed, much to the consternation of the opposite party.

He was now about to relinquish his seat, when he found himself suddenly assailed by a host of tongues, both male and female.

“*Quoi, Monsieur! pensez-vous partir comme cela, après avoir gagné tout notre argent?*” said a lady, whose cheek was highly flushed with the excitement produced by her losses.

“*Plaisantez-vous, Monsieur l’Anglais?*” pertly demanded a young girl of fifteen, who, seated by her mother, had been losing her single franc stakes during the *veine* of our hero.

“*Mais, Monsieur, on ne fait pas comme cela en France,*” observed a man, equally inflamed with disappointment and anger.

“*A-t-on jamais vu?*” remarked another, turning

round to his next neighbour, and attempting a sneer that was checked by his choleric humour.

Clifford's eye flashed fire as it wandered from one to the other of the last speakers ; but he might as well have attempted to set bounds to the course of the ocean, as to arrest the vivacity of a Frenchman, when under the strong excitement of loss at play.

"Am I of necessity compelled to play until I lose?" he inquired of De Forsac. "Is it a rule of the game?" he pursued, more impetuously, "for in no other case do I choose to remain."

De Forsac told him that it was always customary for a player to keep his seat, until he lost a game, when his place was usually occupied by another. Madame Astelli bowed a confirmation. Satisfied with the assurance, our hero again sat down ; his opponents threw notes and gold to a large amount upon the table.

"What is your stake, sir?" inquired Madame de S——, who almost invariably preceded or succeeded the *Commandant* in the game.

"My stake, madam," replied Clifford, in French, "is half a franc ; those who bet for me will, of course, put down what they please." Madame de S—— bowed.

De Forsac threw down twenty Napoleons ; a few other betters smaller sums : so that in all there were about fifty pieces of gold upon the table.

"*Je tiens le jeu,*" said the Princesse to those around her, at the same time putting their money, which had been previously staked, on one side of the table.

The men took up their money in a rage, while half suppressed exclamations burst from their lips ; the women pouted, fretted, scolded, frowned, and vented their spleen by commenting among themselves on the parsimony of the *Anglais*, in putting down ten sous, when he had been a winner of some thousands of francs.

"I hope he may win," said one, "he will be so vexed at getting only half a franc for his trouble."

"I hope so, too," replied another ; "not only for

that reason, but that the Princesse may lose her fifty Louis, since she has been so selfish as to exclude us all."

"Why should you be so ungenerous, my dear Victorine?" observed Madame de S——, who had overheard her, and in the mildest tone imaginable. "You have not been excluded more than others, and you know very well that I have lost money enough to-night to justify my availing myself of a privilege common to every player."

Mademoiselle Victorine was for a moment disconcerted, but speedily recovering herself, she assured Madame de S—— that she had not been serious in what she said.

At length Clifford was unsuccessful: he lost the game; and many of the opposite party were more enraged at his losing than they could have been had he gained. In the latter instance, they would have congratulated themselves in not having put down their money; as it was, they secretly cursed him for the withdrawal of his originally large stakes: a disappointment, however, for which they were only indebted to themselves. It was evident, our hero saw, that they were sorely thwarted, and annoyed, and he delighted in the act. Supper was soon afterwards announced, and they repaired to the suite of apartments prepared for the purpose.

Nothing could be more strikingly illustrative of that aptitude to lose sight of past, in present impressions, which so completely distinguishes the French character, than the appearance of the numerous groups now seated round the festive board. Beautiful women, whose countenances had the moment before been overcast with unamiable and conflicting feelings, were loud in the indulgence of their gayety. Men, whose bosoms had been recently torn with rage and vexation, now gave vent to the wild sallies of their imaginations, and on every hand was to be heard laughter, repartee, and expressions of good humour. The sparkling wines of Champagne bubbled in every glass, and exhilarating the

animal spirits, drew wit and mirth from the recesses in which they had slumbered, inspiring a freedom, an *abandon*, which increased with each succeeding moment.

Each lady was attended by a cavalier, who poured forth the tribute of his admiration, sometimes in soft and whispered sounds which dimmed for a moment the brilliancy of her dark and sparkling eye, but oftener in strains of deeper adulation, and evidently intended to be overheard by those around. Clifford was seated between Madame Astelli and Adeline: immediately opposite were Madame Bourdeaux and De Forsac. To Astelli, who certainly shone like the presiding goddess of the feast, were addressed all the more brilliant compliments of the young men at her end of the table; and to these she replied with a tact, a vivacity, and a freedom, which sufficiently denoted that she was no stranger to the homage so unequivocally rendered to her charms. Whenever a compliment was paid to her, her eyes fell on our hero with a peculiar expression, which might have been construed, "I hear and reply to all these things, but I regard them not."

This did not escape the quick eye of De Forsac; and more than once his glance rested on Adeline, with an expression of mingled reproach, derision, and anger.

After supper the whole party, with very few exceptions, repaired once more to the *écarté* tables, from whence few of them thought of departing until the sun was far above the horizon.

"Will you not take a glass of champagne with me?" said Astelli to our hero, in her softest voice, as they still lingered at the table.

"With the utmost pleasure," he returned, seizing a bottle, and pouring out the sparkling beverage.

"You will not leave us yet?" she asked, inquiringly, and with an air of entreaty.

"Not if you wish me to remain," replied Clifford, taking up his glass.

"*Oh non, pas comme cela; trinquons à la Française,*" she observed, playfully.

They touched their glasses; Adeline, who had been conversing apart with De Forsac, turned suddenly round at the moment.

"*Vous voyez,*" muttered the marquis, and, with evident impatience in his manner, he moved towards the card-room.

"*J'ai un mal de tête de fou,*" remarked Adeline, approaching the table. "*Astelli, ma chère, il faut que je vous quitte. Monsieur Delmaine, auriez-vous la bonté de me conduire?*"

Clifford instantly arose—Madame Astelli looked disappointed. "*J'espère que nous aurons souvent le plaisir de vous voir, Monsieur,*" she at length observed.

Our hero declared himself delighted with his evening's amusement, and promised to return. Madame Astelli extended her hand, he shook it slightly, and fancied that he felt its pressure on his own. Drawing the arm of Adeline through his, he then descended to the vestibule, where the sleepy porter was endeavouring to arouse the still more sleepy driver of the first *fiacre* near them.

"*La Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin,*" said Adeline, in a voice just loud enough to be heard by the coachman; and pulling up the glass, she threw herself into an angle of the carriage, with a seeming determination to preserve an obstinate silence.

"*Qu'avez-vous donc?*" inquired Clifford, taking her hand, which she faintly struggled to release.

"*Oh, je suis bien malheureuse!*" returned the really agitated girl, bursting into tears.

Delmaine caught her in his arms; he pressed her to his heart, and in a voice of deep emotion and interest, inquired if he had done any thing to offend her.

"*M'aimiez-vous?*" she murmured, as her tears fell in quick succession upon his burning cheek.

"*Si je vous aime! pouvez-vous en douter donc?*" he exclaimed, pressing her still closer to his breast.

The loud beating of their hearts betrayed the agitated state of their feelings. The head of the young girl reclined on the shoulder of her lover. Her now lustreless eyes were half closed beneath their long fringes, while her lips avoided not the searching lips of Delmaine. Suddenly the coach stopped, and the illusion was for the moment dispelled.

Handing her from the *fiacre*, Clifford prepared to follow into her apartments, but an exclamation of surprise and reproach arrested him.

"Surely, Mr. Delmaine, you would not think of entering at this unseasonable hour?"

"And why not?" he replied, in a tone of deep disappointment, as he relinquished the hand which trembled within his own.

"*Eh, mon Dieu ! réfléchissez un instant. Que dirait-on dans l'hôtel !—ce serait une scandale abominable ?*

Clifford was confounded ; for after what had passed, he anticipated neither objection nor difficulty.

"*Comme vous voulez !*" he observed, after a pause, and with a bitterness that clearly manifested his pique and mortification.

"*Que vous êtes injuste,*" she mournfully exclaimed ; "*oh, si vous m'aimez encore, ne me quittez pas en colère—quand, quand vous reverrai-je ?*"

Again he grasped her extended hand. "*Demain vers les trois heures,*" he replied, and throwing himself once more into the *fiacre*, soon regained his hotel in the Rue de Richelieu.

It was long, however, before he obtained repose. His mind was a complete chaos of contending passions ; his imagination a mass of confused and bewildering ideas. He reviewed the several occurrences of the last twenty-four hours, and felt confounded at their varying and contradictory character. Had any one even hinted to him the day before, that he could possibly have waived an engagement with the Stanleys for one with Astelli, or that he could have quarrelled with his best friend from mere dread of incurring the ridicule of a comparative

stranger, he would have treated the insinuation with scorn: yet such circumstances had actually taken place, and he felt deeply humiliated and vexed at the reflection. On this dark view of the picture, his thoughts were not, however, long permitted to linger. He recurred to Adeline—to the fascination of her manner, and her evident attachment for him. Neither the singularity, nor the inconsistency of that attachment after so short an acquaintance, or, more strictly speaking, no acquaintance at all, seemed to excite either doubt or surprise in his mind, for she appeared to him as a child of nature, artless, affectionate, and without reserve.

We have already remarked that there was one decided weakness in the character of Delmaine. The reader will be at no loss to understand that that weakness originated in an extreme susceptibility to female beauty, and a too great aptitude to render homage to every woman who showed herself not insensible to his physical and moral attractions. That this feeling may have had its origin as much in vanity as in generous affection, we pretend not to deny; and though it may shock the lovers of perfection in the human character to discover so glaring a blemish in the hero of a novel, we can only remind them that we have pledged ourselves simply to describe man as he is, and not as he should be. Constituted as Clifford was, it is not surprising that the apparent devotedness of the young Frenchwoman should have produced a strong and absorbing impression on his mind. His were not feelings to be nourished and strengthened by opposition or coldness. The very pride of his nature would have enabled him to crush a passion which was not met with equal warmth, while, on the other hand, every manifestation of increasing attachment at once commanded and obtained the full and unqualified homage of his soul. Had Adeline, during the several singular scenes of that evening, evinced disappointment by any expression of ill-humour, or suffered the workings of pique to betray her into invective, the illusion would have been instantly dispelled; but against

the eloquent appeal of her full blue eye, and the trembling intonations of her melodious voice, there was no resistance, and he had felt his heart subdued without making an effort to check their influence. Caprice and petulance would only have had a tendency to disgust and to undeceive; but gentleness and uncomplaining suffering, were weapons which, when employed on such a character as Clifford, were in themselves sufficient to command every affection of the heart.

It was in this light, dangerous to his own peace, that he now thought of the fascinating girl: and when at length he did contrive to snatch a few hours repose, he fancied himself more in love with her than ever.

CHAPTER XI.

WHEN Delmaine awoke on the following morning, his love for Adeline seemed to have passed away like the imperfect impression of a dream, and regret and self-condemnation were the almost exclusive feelings by which he was assailed. He thought of Dormer, of his singular and unexpected appearance at Astelli's, and of his still more singular and unexpected disappearance. Anxious, yet half dreading to learn if there was any opening to a reconciliation, he rang for his servant, with a view to ascertain whether Dormer had called during his absence.

In a few minutes the old man appeared, but Clifford had not courage to put the question he intended in a direct manner.

"Walters, have you any letters for me?"

"No, sir," said Walters, who, having served nearly half his life in the army, had too high a sense of re-

spect and duty, to indulge in more words than were absolutely necessary.

"Have you any message for me?"

"No, sir."

"Has no one called during my absence—recollect yourself?"

"Nobody, sir," returned Walters, somewhat startled at the emphatic manner of his young master.

"Has Mr. Dormer not been here?" at length exclaimed our hero, in a tone of mingled pique and passion.

"No sir, certainly not," said the old man, involuntarily retreating back a pace, and evidently much surprised at this cross-questioning.

"What is the hour?" demanded Clifford, in a milder tone.

Walters approached the *secrétaire*, and looked at his master's watch. "Past one, sir."

"Past one!" thundered Delmaine, throwing off the clothes and springing out of bed. "Quick, order the cab, and bring me a cup of coffee."

"Is my master mad?" mused Walters, as he descended to execute the order.

But his master was not mad, though very much annoyed, both with Dormer and himself. "Strange friendship indeed!" he muttered, as he proceeded with his toilet. "How can one man be thus ridiculously offended with another, for so trifling a dereliction—he has done the same thing a hundred times, and can have no right to arraign my conduct; but no, I do him wrong; he can only have my interest at heart, and my unworthy petulance has offended him. His very appearance in the *salon* last night, must be attributed to the friendly feelings he entertained in my favour; but if so, why did he not speak? why did he leave the place so abruptly?—no, I cannot forgive him for this: it savours too much of *espionage*." And thus he went on, alternately accusing and justifying Dormer, without coming to any positive conclusion on the subject, until he had finished dressing and swallowed his coffee.

The same suite of apartments being appropriated to Sir Edward and his friends, in visiting his uncle, Clifford of course was certain of meeting the Stanleys ; and thither he now directed his course, though with a heart not quite at ease, and an imagination impressed with the idea that his reception would be less than usually friendly, for his own feelings told him that he had done wrong, and he could not but admit that his apology of the preceding day might be deemed insufficient. Yet, however ready to acknowledge, and willing to atone for his errors, he could not endure that another should make him sensible of them. He, therefore, prepared to arm himself with all the pride of his nature, in the event of any remarkable coolness being manifested, and moreover resolved so to regulate his manner by circumstances, as to leave it doubtful whether his visit was intended for Sir Edward alone, or for the party collectively.

It is not therefore surprising, that under these impressions, and with these feelings, he should unconsciously have worked himself into that very stiffness of manner which was so likely to call for a corresponding conduct on the part of his friends.

Arrived at the Hotel Mirabeau, he fancied he was received precisely with that sort of formality, into the anticipation of which he had successfully tortured himself, and he saluted each individual of the party with a stateliness and distance which passed not unobserved ; but what particularly mortified and contributed to confirm him in this belief, was the reserved manner of Dormer, who, standing in the recess of a window conversing with Colonel Stanley, had scarcely noticed his slight bow of recognition.

A game of chess, which his entrance had for a moment interrupted, was now resumed, between Helen and his uncle, and he drew a seat carelessly towards the table.

"I hope, Miss Stanley," he at length ventured to observe, "that the French opera met your expectation last evening?"

Colouring deeply, Helen for a moment turned her eyes upon him, with an expression which he found no difficulty in translating—"Surely you are the last person in the world who should make any allusion to the events of last evening." Recovering her self-possession, however, she replied, in a tone of indifference, while her arm was extended to take a bishop which her adversary had left exposed, and on which depended in a great measure, the success of the game, "Perfectly so, Mr. Delmaine, I never was more amused in my life—Sir Edward, the game is mine, you have but one move left before I give you check-mate."

If any one thing could ruffle the usually good temper of the baronet, it was, to be found wanting in proper foresight in covering his pieces; and as he had ever been considered an excellent chess player, it was a source of no trifling mortification to him to be beaten by a woman; more especially one whom he considered a mere novice. Sir Edward was an old man, and not in love; and men who are old and not in love, do not much care to be vanquished at chess by the prettiest woman in Christendom. As some whist players have a horror of having their cards overlooked by a spectator, under the impression that it brings them ill-luck, so the good old baronet felt inclined to think that the presence of his nephew had, in some measure, given rise to the oversight which compromised the game; and he began to vent his spleen, by alluding to his defalcation of the preceding day.

"And pray, sir, how long is it since you have acquired the caprice of breaking off engagements with your friends, and devoting yourself to strangers? May I beg to know what became of you last night?"

"My engagement of last night, sir," said Delmaine, proudly, "was of a very peculiar nature." As he spoke, his eye wandered towards the window, and he remarked a contemptuous smile upon the lip of Dormer. "But I had hoped," he pursued, in a more hurried tone, irritated at once by this circumstance, and by the sarcastic

tone of his uncle, "I had hoped that my apology would have been found sufficiently explanatory."

"Nay, my dear friend," coolly observed the colonel, "it is hardly fair to subject Mr. Delmaine to a cross-examination. We have had his apology in due form, and the most rigid laws of etiquette cannot well exact more."

There was deep sarcasm in the tone in which this remark was uttered, and it did not escape the attention of Delmaine. He, however, made no reply; but, biting his lip, and leaning his head upon his hand, continued to look at the chess-board, where kings, queens, knights, bishops, castles, and pawns, danced before his eyes, without his being conscious of the identity of either. More vexed, however, at the silence and reserve of Helen than at the observation of her father, he kept chewing the cud of his mortification, and working up his feelings until they had attained a high pitch of excitement.

"There is no one here," he mentally exclaimed, in bitterness of heart, "who cares for me; and I must seek for happiness elsewhere."

His future fate seemed to hang upon the moment. Had he been received by Helen with that openness and frankness which had hitherto distinguished their meetings, the jealous impressions by which he had been governed on his entrance, would have been utterly removed; but though prepared, as we have already observed, to expect this mixture of reserve and formality, he felt himself totally unequal to the encounter.

"Now, then, Sir Edward," remarked his adversary, in a tone of gayety which no one but a man determined to think otherwise, could have failed to perceive was assumed, "you are fairly caught in my toils—check mate!"

"What delight she seems to take in winning a silly game at chess," thought Clifford, and he sighed.

The baronet looked on every hand for some chance of escape, but the web was too securely prepared.

"Humph!" he ejaculated, as he was wont to do when any thing either affected or perplexed him. "Check mate, do you say? Let me see—yes; true bill, my dear—fairly vanquished, I admit. And, pray, in whose toils have you been caught?" he added, turning to his nephew, "that you sit there looking so completely the image of despair. Some pretty Frenchwoman, I suppose, has spread her meshes around your heart last evening, and you have not yet slept her image off your brain."

Delmaine coloured deeply, and he met the gaze of Dormer—then again turned upon him—with an expression of impatience and defiance, as he replied, with ill-assumed carelessness of manner, "That his heart was never more free than at that moment, and that he trusted it would long continue so."

Suppressing, with difficulty, the sigh which laboured for release, Helen rose from the table, and approached the little group near the window, where she now commenced an animated conversation with Dormer; so animated, indeed, that, to her companion, it was evidently forced; while Delmaine only read in it a confirmation of her utter indifference for him.

"I can have no business here," he thought; "this reserve is too marked—this conduct too pointed. But there is one," and he fired with a sort of vengeful exultation at the idea, "who will not receive me with this chilling apathy of manner."

It was past the hour of his engagement with Adeline. He took up his hat. No one asked him to prolong his visit, or to dine; and he felt this neglect more bitterly, for it was a thing unusual. He shook his uncle's hand slightly, and simply bowing to the remainder of the party, with a determination, formed at the instant, never to return uninvited, hastened to regain his cabriolet.

A host of contradictory feelings rushed on his heart during the short drive to the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, and never was he more completely the slave of his

impressions than at that moment. Entering the apartments of Adeline with a flushed cheek and beating pulse, he beheld her reclining on an ottoman, dressed in a loose robe, which rather developed than concealed the rich beauty of her person. Her luxuriant hair hung in wild profusion over her face and neck, and some powerful excitement had evidently given a glow to her cheek, and an expression of deep languor to her eyes. One hand supported her head on the cushion, in the other was an open volume of the *Liaisons Dangereuses*.

"Is this studied, or natural? Is it accidental, or is it for effect?" was the first thought of our hero; but the artless and affectionate manner in which she started from her position to receive him, dispelled every doubt.

"Oh, I thought you would never come!" she exclaimed, every feature of her countenance expressing the gratification she experienced. "If you but knew," she pursued, "how tedious the moments have appeared since the hour you named!"

They sat upon the ottoman. The soul of Delmaine was all excitement and rapture; that of Adeline, tenderness, abandonment, and love. Gradually they approached each other. The arm of her lover was thrown around the waist of the young girl, and his burning lips were pressed to hers. He forgot the world, Miss Stanley, and himself. Glowing, yielding, trembling, Adeline lingered in his warm embrace, and when they awoke from the intoxicating illusion, they felt as if no power, no circumstance on earth, could divide them.

It was late before our hero thought of leaving the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, and as he was about to depart, recollecting that he had no dinner engagement, he proposed that Adeline should accompany him to a restaurateur's, and thence to the Opéra Comique, where Ponchard was fascinating every ear with his sweetest notes in *La Dame Blanche*, a piece just brought out, and already acquiring very great popularity.

To this she readily assented, and commenced her

toilet, while he repaired to his hotel, to make some little alteration in his own dress.

On his return he found her ready, and they proceeded to Beauvillier's, in the Rue de Richelieu. Delmaine asked for a private room ; there was none, he was informed, unoccupied. He was about to depart, when Beauvillier himself, who had just descended the staircase leading to the *cabinets*, approached, to say that a party, who had dined early, were preparing to leave their room, which in the course of a minute or two would be at his disposal. While Delmaine stood for a moment hesitating whether he should wait or repair to Very's, the party alluded to began to descend the stairs. He raised his eyes instinctively, and almost gasped for breath as he beheld the Colonel, Miss Stanley, and Dormer. He was at the further extremity of the saloon, and on a parallel line with the sloping direction of the stairs. Unless they chanced to turn round, there was every probability of his escaping unobserved. Just, however, as they had reached the bottom, a burst of laughter from a party of young Englishmen, who were swallowing their champagne at the table near which he stood, attracted the attention of Helen. A flush was on her cheek at the moment, but in the next instant she became pale as death, and evidently moved with difficulty. Dormer also had turned his head in the same direction, and seemed petrified with astonishment and indignation. His eyes shot an angry and contemptuous glance as he passed, but to this, for the first time in his life, our hero replied not.—He felt the awkwardness—the doubtfulness of his position, and was at once deeply humiliated and confounded. Desirous of hiding his feelings from his companion, he endeavoured to rally, but the attempt was vain. Adeline Dorjeville had too much penetration not to perceive his emotion and to understand its cause. No reproach escaped her lips ; but in the tear which trembled in her eye, and in the sigh, which she struggled not to suppress, while her arm lingered less heavily on his, he read

sufficient evidence of the pain he had unconsciously given her.

Despite of champagne, and all his attempts at gaiety, our hero found himself unequal to a *tête-à-tête* with his companion, and willingly repaired, at an earlier hour than he had originally intended, to the theatre.

When they entered their *loge*, Ponchard was warbling forth his melodious strains to an audience who seemed to hang upon his music as upon sounds of celestial promise, and the dropping of a pin might have been heard in the short and occasional pauses of his song.—The noise produced by the opening of the box-door drew the attention of many of the audience, and among others, that of a party on the opposite side of the house, on whom the eyes of Delmaine fell with a stupid expression, while a feeling of sickness stole over his heart. In that *loge* sat the colonel, his daughter, Dormer, and De Forsac. Could he have assumed coolness and self-possession sufficient to admit of his observing the several expressions of countenance in that party, our hero would have traced in that of the marquis an air of deep and unqualified exultation and satisfaction, which not all his native tact and habitual self-command could hide at that moment. This, indeed, was unlooked for by De Forsac, and when his eye met that of Adeline, it expressed a variety of feelings, intelligible only to herself.

It was some time before Delmaine could summon courage to look before him, and when he did, he beheld the penetrating eye of the colonel fastened on his box; a deep frown darkened his brow, and his whole countenance denoted the action of sudden and powerful indignation. A painful consciousness of shame compelled Clifford to withdraw his own gaze, and he turned towards the stage, though he could not, in the confusion of his thoughts, distinguish a word that was said. It was in vain, however, that he attempted to confine the direction of his eyes to that quarter. They wandered mechanically and insensibly to the party opposite. Miss Stanley sat in an angle of the *loge*, supporting, with

her hand, a cheek of almost equal whiteness, presenting a striking contrast to the dark tresses which lingered upon her forehead. Her eyes were riveted upon the stage, but evidently with effort, and to the occasional remarks addressed by those around her, she replied with seriousness and evident abstraction. Dormer, too—the teasing, the ubiquitous Dormer, stood with his arms folded, reclining against the side of the box, and obviously attending more to the movements of the party opposite than to the business of the performance.

Delmaine cursed him in his vexation, for he now admitted the belief that he had planned and produced these several and unpleasant *rencontres*. Unwilling that he should triumph in his success, he resolved to rally; and, as much from the contradictory nature of his feelings, as from a desire to shake off his embarrassment of manner, he entered into conversation with Adeline. But though his lips uttered sounds of kindness, there was no accompanying expression on his countenance; his features were stiff, his action unbending, and his whole demeanour, in short, indicative of reserve. Adeline was not insensible to the change, neither did she appear to be ignorant of the cause. She saw that his position was disagreeable to him, and with a delicacy of feeling which was fully understood and appreciated, urged a severe head-ache, as a plea for retiring; to this Delmaine gladly acceded, and as he left the house, he turned a last look upon the opposite *loge*. Again the attention of the whole party was directed to him and to his companion, and in his cursory glance, he fancied that the eyes of Helen beamed with a mingled expression of melancholy, pain, regret, and despondency; but this impression he sought to dispel, for he had already worked himself into the belief that he was hated; and, strange as it may appear, he rather wished to persuade himself of the fact than to reject the supposition.

“Do you know who that lady is with our friend?” said De Forsac, half aside to Dormer, yet furtively watching the countenance of Helen as he spoke.

"Sir!" said Dormer, staring him full in the face, and with an expression that could not be misunderstood.

The marquis felt the blood mount into his cheek. He repeated his question.

"I should presume," returned Dormer, with marked emphasis in his voice and manner, "that that lady can be no stranger to the Marquis de Forsac."

"Really, Mr. Dormer is pleased to give me credit for a much better memory than I actually possess; but, positively, I am not so fortunate as to retain the slightest recollection of her person."

"Does the Marquis de Forsac then find it prudent and convenient, at this precise moment, to disclaim all acquaintance with Mademoiselle Adeline Dorjeville?"

"Oh, true! the young girl whom our friend was so fortunate as to rescue from almost certain death on the day of the funeral: I did not recognise her. By the bye," he continued, in a voice which he affected to lower to a whisper, but still rendered sufficiently distinct for Miss Stanley's ear; "her gratitude was so powerfully excited, that she was induced to solicit his attendance at a party given by Astelli last night—they were inseparable during the evening."

As he finished this sentence, he again glanced at the pale countenance of Helen, and rage, hate, and jealousy, triumphed in his soul, as he remarked her ill-suppressed agitation.

"Are you ill, Helen?" said the colonel, who, seated at the opposite side of the *loge*, had heard nothing of the preceding conversation.

"The heat of the theatre is really insupportable; and, I think, that if you do not particularly wish to remain, I should prefer retiring," she languidly replied.

"By all means, my love," rejoined the colonel, rising. De Forsac was about to offer his arm, when Dormer anticipated the movement.

The marquis bit his lip with vexation, for he wished to give the finishing stroke to his insinuations, by ad-

dressing her more directly on the subject of Adeline and Delmaine.

"Miss Stanley—Helen," said Dormer, as they descended the staircase of the theatre, "believe not what you have heard of Delmaine. This Marquis de Forsac I distrust—his conversation with me was evidently meant to reach your ears—but Clifford is not, cannot be, the being he has been represented."

To the hurried observations of her friend, Helen replied by a look so full of thankfulness, that Dormer could not avoid, at once, cursing and deploring the infatuation of our hero, who could for a moment relinquish the society of such a woman, for one whom he conceived to be utterly degraded and depraved.

"I shall make it a point to see him before we meet again," he pursued. "He will not refuse an explanation, I am sure; and then we shall be enabled to judge how far he may prove worthy of your future consideration."

Again Helen thanked him with a look, and an affectionate pressure of the arm, and they soon found themselves in the *Passage Feydeau*, near which their equipage was in waiting.

"Will you accompany us, marquis?" said the colonel, as he followed the languid form of his daughter into the carriage.

But De Forsac saw that no advantage was to be obtained—no impression to be made, in the then state of mind of Helen. He had, moreover, fixed his libertine gaze on a beautiful woman in the theatre, who sat in a *loge* adjoining that which his party had occupied. With this female he had formed an intimacy many years before, while she was yet a young and inexperienced girl; but, with that inconstancy of character for which he was remarkable, he had soon abandoned her for some new object. Ten years had elapsed since their separation, and he now beheld the child transformed into the woman, whose maturer charms, provoking admiration, led his restless imagination into anticipations of a vo-

luptuousness peculiar, he well knew, to those only whom years and experience have ripened into meridian fulness. De Forsac was true to his principles; for, though he had contrived to render himself a very great favourite with Colonel Stanley, and, notwithstanding he had devoted more time to his society than was consistent with his habits of dissipation, he did not suffer any outward demonstrations of moral conduct to interfere with his private pleasures and secret indulgences. Excusing himself, therefore, he returned to the theatre, where he found no great difficulty in renewing his acquaintance with the object of his present wishes.

Satisfied that Helen would much rather be left to her own thoughts, Dormer declined the invitation likewise. Before they separated, however, he managed to reassure her, by repeating, in a whisper, that he would see Delmainé in the morning. Then, pressing her hand affectionately, he repaired to his hotel.

He had, however, scarcely reached his apartments, when he discovered that he had lost a small ivory tablet, containing memoranda which were of consequence to him. Presuming that he had dropped it in the theatre, he returned immediately in search of it. His first impression was to send in one of the women usually employed as box-keepers; but reflecting on the possibility of her appropriating it to her own use, under the idea of some intrinsic value being attached to it, he changed his purpose, and resolved to enter and look for it himself. The tablet lay, as he had anticipated, on the floor near the spot he had occupied; and, as he stooped to pick it up, the sound of voices in the next *loge*, one of which he recognised for De Forsac's, arrested his attention. A powerful and indefinable feeling of curiosity and interest, induced him to remain; for, however reluctant he might have felt, under different circumstances, to pursue such a course, the occurrences of the day, and his own peculiar distrust of the marquis, he now conceived to be a sufficient justification. Seating himself, therefore, so as to be unobserved by the parties, he was

enabled, from the slightness of the partition, to hear their conversation with distinctness, although carried on in a subdued tone of voice.

"She is unquestionably an elegant woman, both in person and in manner, and will do honour to my choice," was the first connected sentence he could distinguish.

"But we all know you, marquis, to be a refined voluptuary. How then can a cold and insipid Englishwoman inspire you with any thing like ardour in such a pursuit as that of matrimony?"

"You are wrong," rejoined De Forsac. "Englishwomen are neither so cold nor so insipid as you may imagine. It is true, they have less of the vivacity of passion, but their feelings are deep, intense, and lasting. Moreover, they live upon the memory of love, when love itself, and the intoxication of the senses, have passed away."

"Really, you seem to have had some experience in Englishwomen since we last met," said the female, in a tone of pique; "but *à propos*, what renders this *beauté Anglaise* such a paragon of perfection in your eyes?"

"In the first instance, she has fortune," emphatically observed De Forsac.

"Ah! I perfectly understand how necessary a recommendation that is with you—but proceed."

"In the second place, she is a woman of birth and accomplishment."

"And in the third?"

"Lastly and chiefly," said De Forsac, "she has the most desirable person I ever beheld."

"Ah, this is rather more in character, my dear marquis," rejoined the female. "Yet even though she really should possess all these qualifications to the degree you represent, her case is hopeless."

"And why hopeless?"

"Because I pity the woman who should ever become attached to any thing half so inconstant as yourself."

"What injustice you do me, Delphine," said the mar-

quis, in one of those seductive tones, which he so well knew how to assume ; “ so far from entertaining a feeling of inconstancy towards you, I swear by Heaven, that I never loved you better than at this moment.”

“ Oh ! that I can easily believe,” rejoined his companion. “ It is now ten years since we met, and people tell me that I am somewhat improved since our *liaison*. Besides, so long an absence makes a woman a new object of desire. Moreover, you know the proverb, ‘ *On revient toujours à ses premiers amours*.’ ”

“ And never was man so desirous of fulfilling the proverb to the very letter,” said De Forsac, with the deep intonation of passion.

“ *Est-ce bien vrai ?* ” seriously rejoined the female.— “ But tell me all about this Englishwoman,” she pursued, in a livelier tone. “ Are you perfectly sure of her—have you no rival to dread, no obstacle to encounter ? ”

“ Why,” said De Forsac, “ I have a rival, and that is the most amusing part of the affair ; *mais écoutez*. You must know, that on being introduced to this superb creature, I found a young Englishman dangling at her side, who, having accidentally made himself notorious by an affair of honour, had contrived to turn the heads of one or two silly women in consequence. It was easy to discover that he was on better terms with my *belle Anglaise*, than I exactly found convenient for my plans, and I at once resolved, if possible, to detach him from her. I am a tolerable observer of the human character, and have a sort of tact for discovering weaknesses. You know, moreover, that when it suits my interest, I can make myself agreeable as well to men as to women. The Englishman’s foible I soon found to be a fondness for admiration, and a susceptibility of passion, which were likely to be turned to account. *Bref*, I contrived to win his friendship, and the first use I made of this advantage, was to introduce him last night at Astelli’s, where he met with Adeline Dorjeville, who, as you may easily imagine, has been properly instructed. The silly girl had some scruples of con-

science, but, fortunately, her own passions are embarked in my interests. This young fellow was romantic enough to jump from an *entresol*, at the risk of breaking his neck, in order to save her from being trodden to death by some great beast of a horse, and, since that period, she has conceived a *belle passion* for him, which his self-love has induced him to return. This circumstance was rather fortunate, for, such was the obstinacy of the girl, that she would not enter into my plans, until I had worked up her passions, by pointing out the almost certainty of his attaching himself to her. Since then every thing has been going on well, and last night I felt that my projects would be completely successful. It was reserved for this evening, however, to give the *coup de grâce* to the affair."

"*Et comment cela ?*" inquired the female.

"Did you not remark a young man who came into the opposite box with Adeline soon after the performance began, and who left in less than half an hour !"

"A tall, elegant, dark young man, with uncommonly brilliant eyes, yet with a sort of *gaucherie* in his manner ?" hastily rejoined his companion.

"The same," said De Forsac. "That," he pursued, after a slight pause, "is the person in question."

"But how can their mere presence at the theatre possibly have the effect of giving the *coup de grâce* to your plans ?"

"You must know," continued De Forsac, "that the party who sat in the adjoining box to you, were his friends, and, among these, the superb Englishwoman herself."

"Ah ! how unfortunate that I did not see her," interrupted the female ; "but she sat with her back turned against the side of my *loge*. Now I understand," she continued, "why the poor fellow seemed so restless, and so exceedingly *gauche*. Indeed, I wondered, at the time, how his manner could be so little in accordance with his air *distingué*. Of course his meeting with Adeline was purely accidental."

"Accidental!" sneeringly observed De Forsac, evidently piqued at the encomiums bestowed on his rival's person, "*you* ought to know that I never leave any thing to accident. No: the whole affair was planned by myself; La Dorjeville brought him here at my suggestion, and——"

A sudden burst from the orchestra drowned his voice, and Dormer tried in vain to catch the conclusion of the sentence. At the termination of the piece, he listened again, but only broken and indistinct sentences were to be heard, and these were no longer in reference to the subject so recently discussed. The last part of the performance now commenced, and he resolved to withdraw. He had closed the door of his box, and advanced a few yards along the corridor, when he heard another cautiously opened behind him. Turning round, he beheld De Forsac, who, hearing the noise he made in retiring, had glanced hastily after him. Dormer instantly stopped, and folding his arms, seemed to await the approach of the marquis; but the other no sooner found that he was discovered, than he hastily re-closed the door, and Dormer pursued his way to his hotel.

Filled with indignation against the treacherous De Forsac, and anxious at once to open the eyes of his friend to the infamy of his conduct, Dormer knocked at the door of the anti-room leading to Delmaine's apartments. He was told that he was in bed. Leaving a message, therefore, with his servant, to say that he wished particularly to see him in the morning, he retired to his own couch, where he passed a great part of the night, in revolving the several occurrences which had taken place since his meeting with Delmaine in the Rue Castiglione. Dormer really felt a sincere regard for his friend, but, like too many men, he had forgotten, that the errors for which he so unrelentingly condemned him, were precisely similar to those into which he himself had previously fallen. Of this he now appeared to be sensible; and he resolved to meet Clifford in the

morning with all the abandonment of friendship and good feeling. He doubted not, that by exposing the artifices of the infamous De Forsac, and the worthlessness of a female who had momentarily seduced him from his friends, his better sense would conquer his infatuation, and induce him once more to estimate the happiness he had so wantonly thrown from him.

Delmaine, as Walters truly asserted, had retired to his bed almost immediately after conducting Adeline home from the theatre: but, tossed about in a state of excitation, his mind was too much distracted to admit of repose. Never had he felt more truly wretched than during the last few hours. From the moment of his quitting the *loge*, when he fancied he beheld a subdued expression of interest in the eyes of Helen, he had been tortured by the stings of remorse and self-accusation; so true it is, that a consciousness of error makes us feel with acuteness any mark of kindness from those whom we know we have wronged. He felt, moreover, that the tardiness of his departure must have had a powerful tendency to impress Miss Stanley with the belief that his conduct had been premeditated, and this painful reflection continued to haunt him up to the moment of his separation from Adeline Dorjeville. With still more bitterness did it occur to him in the silence and solitude of his apartment, and from the fact itself, his mind gradually reverted to the cause. It seemed so extraordinary a circumstance that they should have met, at the same restaurateur's and at the same theatre on the same evening, that he could not avoid believing these several *rencontres* had been planned; and he at once fixed upon Dormer as the planner. The absurdity of the presumption, in his then state of mind, never once occurred to him; neither did he for a moment consider that it was utterly impossible that Dormer should have had the slightest knowledge of his movements.

His belief in this fact was not at all lessened by the recollection of Dormer's meeting with Miss Stanley on the morning of her arrival in Paris, and the evident

interest he invariably took in every thing relating to her. A new light seemed to flash across his mind. There could be no doubt that Dormer was his secret rival, and that under the mask of friendship, he was endeavouring to undermine his influence. Alas! poor Delmaine, how strictly correct were you in the assumption of the fact; how wrong in that of the identity of the man! Yet, of what want of generosity, of what inconsistency, will not the human mind be capable, when under the influence of strong disappointment and misguided feeling. No sooner had he admitted these recollections and impressions, than, nursing them into conviction, he firmly resolved never to renew the slightest familiarity of intercourse with his perfidious friend, whom he could only suspect without a possibility of charging him with the offence.

Thus assailed by blended feelings of anger against Dormer, and of contempt for himself, mingled with almost inexplicable sensations in regard to Helen, he passed the greater part of the night; his distrust of the former increasing with his reflections, until he almost fancied him his greatest enemy; his esteem for the latter augmenting, as he dwelt on the irretrievable forfeit he had made of all claim to her future favour—nay, even to her future acquaintance; for he felt, that after the occurrences of the last evening, he could never again venture into her presence.

In the morning he was awakened by Walters, who came to say that Mr. Dormer was waiting to see him in the breakfast-room on particular business.

"Mr. Dormer waiting to see me on particular business?" he repeated, with an air of astonishment.

"Yes, sir," said Walters; "he called last night, but you were in bed, and I thought you would not wish to be disturbed by the delivery of the message."

"Tell Mr. Dormer that I shall be with him immediately."

Walters left the room, and Delmaine hastened to complete his toilet. His bitterness of feeling against Dor-

mer was in no way abated, and he now determined to treat him with the utmost distance. What he possibly wanted with him, he could not at all divine; but his imagination soon supplied him with a motive. "Of course he is come," he thought, "to try what effect the events of last evening have produced upon me; but his Mentorship, as De Forsac justly calls it, is over at last, thank Heaven, and I shall disappoint him."

In a few minutes he entered the breakfast-room. Dormer was reading the paper, but no sooner perceived his friend, than he threw it down, rose, and extended his hand.

"Will you be obliging enough to resume your seat, sir?" said Delmaine, somewhat haughtily, and without noticing this mark of reconciliation.

Dormer coloured deeply—he hesitated a moment—made an effort to curb his feelings, then sat down in the place he had previously occupied.

"May I beg to know to what I am to attribute the honour of this visit, Mr. Dormer?"

"Clifford—Delmaine!" said Dormer, earnestly.

"Mr. Delmaine, if you please, sir!" interrupted our hero, with quickness.

Again Dormer struggled with his feelings. "Delmaine, we were once school-fellows, and until lately have been friends."

"But are so no longer, Mr. Dormer. Will you be kind enough to favour me with the particular business which has induced this visit?"

"My business is that of interest in your happiness—
anxiety in your welfare, Clif—Mr. Delmaine."

"Upon my word, Mr. Dormer, you are extremely kind; but I do not wish that you should distress yourself about me, or my happiness."

"This is too much," said Dormer, rising impatiently. Then, after a pause, "I wish to warn you against the Marquis de Forsac, the serpent whom you have taken to your bosom—a man without principle."

"Sir, I beg that you will discontinue such language

in my presence—the Marquis de Forsac is my friend, and—”

“Ay,” interrupted Dormer, with bitterness, “a *new* friend, who will sting you to the soul, even before you are aware of your danger.”

“Better to be stung by a new friend than by an old one,” observed Delmaine, contemptuously. “But to this particular business, sir. I have an engagement this morning, and you will excuse me, if I ask you to be brief.”

“By Heavens; you are the only man on earth from whom I would endure such supercilious treatment!” exclaimed Dormer, with vehemence, striking his hand upon the breakfast table with violence. “Delmaine,” he pursued, in a calmer tone, “if you are not infatuated beyond recall with that worthless creature, with whom you so unblushingly appeared at the theatre last evening—”

“Stop, sir,” interrupted Clifford, angrily, the recollection of last evening’s occurrences, and his recent suspicions of Dormer, flashing with additional force on his mind. “I desire you will never allude to that lady, in my presence, without respect; know, sir, that she is under my protection.”

“Good Heavens! have you been so imprudent—so utterly lost to yourself, and what you owe to others?” exclaimed Dormer.

“Mr. Dormer, I do not understand such language, neither do I admit the right of any man to arraign my actions.”

“Have you no regard for Miss Stanley? have you no respect for her father?”

“Mr. Dormer, I repeat, I do not understand such liberty of language,” replied Delmaine, in a tone of even greater excitement; “and I beg that this interview may be terminated at once.”

“Then be it terminated,” said Dormer, snatching up his hat, and hastening from the apartment. “Curse his obstinacy!” he muttered, bitterly, as he closed the door.

“What a fool I was to give myself any trouble about him.”

And thus was the rupture between these warm-hearted, generous, but impetuous friends, widened beyond a possibility of future reconciliation.

CHAPTER XII.

No sooner had Dormer departed, than, with his usual inconsistency of character, Delmaine bitterly regretted the haughtiness of manner he had assumed, and more than ever taxed himself with unkindness and injustice. While their interview lasted, he was supported as much by his pride, as by the impression which had been suffered to creep over his mind the preceding evening, and his resolution had rather been strengthened than weakened, during the few succeeding hours. But when left entirely to himself, and he had found opportunity for dispassionately considering the matter, he felt that he had acted unjustly. There was nothing in the manner or language of his friend, to justify his hasty and ungenerous suspicion ; a suspicion which originated rather in the pique he entertained at the cool bearing of Dormer towards him, than in any positive ground for accusation. This idea had been strengthened by the several recent annoying and singular coincidences.

As he revolved the various observations made by Dormer during their short interview, he was compelled to admit that they all originated in regard and interest in his welfare ; and when he recurred to the last remark in relation to Miss Stanley, he hated himself for the ungenerous impression he had even momentarily nourished. Yet, while he acquitted him of any thing like insincerity in his conduct, he saw nothing more in his insinuations

against De Forsac and Adeline, than the workings of prejudice, and a desire to exercise that spirit of admonition, which he had previously found so irksome. The strong language he made use of in alluding to the Marquis and Adeline, he conceived to have originated in his undisguised dislike for both; and it never once occurred to him, that there could be any actual ground for the severity of his assertions.

But however he might differ from his friend in these particulars, and whatever might be his restlessness of feeling under this sort of friendly *surveillance*, which the latter seemed to feel himself authorized in exercising over him, had Dormer now stood in his presence, Clifford would have confessed his error and solicited forgiveness; nay, have deemed himself but too happy if, by such a concession, the intimacy and warmth of their former friendship could be restored. But every hope of the kind was gone; he had offended Dormer without a possibility of expiation, and the uncertainty he felt in regard to the manner in which an apology would be received, deterred him from writing: since, however willing he might be to make an atonement that he felt persuaded would be received, the idea of offering one that might be rejected, was far too galling to his pride.

From the unpleasantness of his reflections on this subject, he once more reverted to Sir Edward and the Stanleys; but even here, the picture wore the same gloomy and disheartening colouring. It was impossible, after the unfortunate meeting of the last evening, (a meeting which, now that, in his cooler moments, he had rejected the injurious supposition that Dormer had been instrumental in bringing it about, he seemed to think had been fated,) that he could present himself before the Stanleys without an explanation; for though he had never yet publicly declared himself as the lover of Helen, yet he had certainly appeared in that light, both to the colonel and to Sir Edward, who had each remarked their growing attachment with manifest, though unavowed, satisfaction. Even Delmaine himself knew that his at-

tentions had been too little equivocal to escape observation ; and it was his consciousness, added to the sense of shame and unworthiness he experienced at the thought of meeting her whom he felt he had so deeply injured, that now determined him to discontinue his customary visits to the Rue de la Paix. Yet how to accomplish this without giving serious offence to his uncle, whom he did not wish to undeceive, he knew not. As Sir Edward and the Stanleys occupied the same suite of apartments, it was impossible to visit one party without meeting the other. In this dilemma, he thought of an expedient which he fancied would answer his purpose, and do away with the necessity for visiting there at all. Accordingly, after swallowing his coffee, and musing a few minutes, he wrote the following note to the baronet :

“ MY DEAR UNCLE,

“ A slight misunderstanding has arisen between Dormer and myself. As he is in the daily habit of visiting the Stanleys, I am sure you will not attribute my conduct either to neglect or disrespect for yourself, if I deny myself the pleasure of seeing you, while you continue to occupy the apartment in the Hôtel Mirabeau. I shall send Walters every day to inquire after your health.

“ Believe me,

“ My dear Uncle,

“ With every affectionate feeling,

“ Your grateful Nephew,

“ CLIFFORD DELMAINE.

“ *Hôtel des Princes, Rue de Richelieu.*”

Having finished and sealed this laconic epistle, he rang for Walters, and desired him to take it to his uncle, and wait for an answer. Too impatient, however, to endure the suspense and doubt he felt in regard to the manner in which it would be received, he sallied forth on the Boulevard, and before he had well determined whither he should direct his course, suddenly found himself at the corner of the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin.

The image of Adeline presented itself, and he pursued his course to her apartments.

She was seated at the breakfast table, pale, as if from suffering, and her countenance wore an expression of deep melancholy; yet she endeavoured to appear gay, and when she rose to receive him, it was with a smile of joy, and an air of undissembled pleasure. Her whole demeanour, in short, was so interesting and so *naïve*, that Delmaine, as he recollected the harsh expressions of Dormer, could not help feeling indignant at his injustice and his severity.

"How kind of you to surprise me thus, after deserting me so early last evening!" And her look expressed the pain that early desertion had given her.

"I was very—very unwell indeed! Forgive me, dearest Adeline: I was not myself."

"Well, I will forgive you; but you must promise not to have any more of these indispositions," she remarked.

"I do promise!" he exclaimed, as encircling her waist with his arm, he drew her gently towards him. The movement dislodged a folded paper, which fell from her bosom to the ground. She stooped to pick it up, but Clifford anticipated her.

"What have we here?" he exclaimed, "a *billet-doux*?"

"I should be sorry to have many such," replied Adeline, with a sigh, and vainly attempting to recover it.

Clifford opened and looked at it. It was a bill from her milliner—the amount five hundred francs. "Is it paid?" he asked.

Adeline coloured, and held down her head. "I have not the means of paying it," she whispered.

"Have you any other bills unpaid?" he demanded.

"Oh, non, non, non," she hastily replied, burying her face on his shoulder; "do not ask me, I entreat you," and she wildly returned his embrace.

Clifford felt the heart of the young girl beat violently. He drew forth his note case unperceived, and taking out a *billet de banque*, for a thousand francs, enclosed it,

unobserved, in the *mémoire* ; and replacing it in her bosom, whispered, " Pay ~~this~~ as soon as I am gone, Adeline ; I shall return presently."

Disengaging himself from her arms, he rose to depart. Adeline raised her head ; her cheek was suffused with crimson, and a tear trembled on her long lashes, as with an air of deep confusion, she followed his receding figure with her eyes.

On his return to the Rue de Richelieu, he found an answer to his note. His hand trembled as he read it, for the appalling monosyllable, " sir," was the first word that met his eye. The following were its contents :—

" SIR,

" I desire you will never call me your dear uncle again, for I am no longer your dear uncle. I have heard of your proceedings at the theatre last night, and am perfectly ashamed of you. How dared you, sir, insult Colonel Stanley and his daughter, by placing yourself immediately opposite to them, with an artful Frenchwoman ? If you continue such conduct, sir, I shall disinherit you, and then you may have the bare baronetcy for your pains ; and until you learn to behave yourself better, I desire that you will never come near me. As for my health, sir, you need not trouble yourself about it. I shall live long enough yet to disappoint you. Oh ! Clifford, Clifford, I had hoped better things of you : but I see you are fast following in the steps of your cousin.

" Your offended Uncle,

" E. DELMAINE."

" So," thought Clifford, after he had perused the note for the third time, gradually working himself into a ferment, which increased with each reading, " even my uncle casts me off from his affection, and an inseparable barrier is placed between me and those who were so recently my friends. The Stanleys are indignant at a conduct which they believe to have been premeditated,

Dormer has confirmed them in that impression, and his uncle has been made a party in their cause. Well, no matter: since I am compelled to throw myself upon strangers, be it so—they, perhaps, will prove less unjust—it is now a matter of utter indifference to me what may ensue.” He rang for his servant.

“Walters,” he said, “you need not sit up for me to-night—it is probable I shall not return.”

“Not return, sir!” exclaimed Walters, with almost alarm in his countenance.

“Not return, sir! No. What do you mean by repeating my words? I suppose we shall have you turning Mentor next,” said Clifford, angrily.

The old man sighed. His master was not always wont to treat him thus; and he thought him strangely altered within the last few days.

Delmaine went to his *secrétaire*, took out several notes, emptied a *rouleau* of gold into his purse, threw on his hat, and, attempting to whistle a tune, which his inward emotion rendered false in almost every note, once more set off for the Rue de la Chaussée d’Antin.

“God bless him!” said Walters, as he closed the door, “his temper is sadly soured since this trip to Paris, and every thing seems to be going wrong—would that we were back again in Grosvenor-street.”

Let us explain in what manner Sir Edward became acquainted with the occurrences, which induced his petulant reply to his nephew’s letter.

As the party were seated at breakfast, the good old baronet inquired of Helen if Clifford had joined their party to the theatre. A deep and painful blush suffused her cheek, as she replied equivocally, that she believed Mr. Delmaine had been present at the performance.

“Do you only believe it then?” said Sir Edward, with an arch look, and glancing good-humouredly at the colonel.

But the colonel was by no means inclined to be facetious on the subject. “Let us not, my dear Delmaine, advert to this circumstance,” he remarked seriously;

" suffice it to say, that your nephew was at the theatre, but not of our party."

" How is this ?" thought Sir Edward, and he almost felt inclined to be angry with his friend for the apparent indifference with which he spoke of him.

A servant, at this moment, entered with a note to Sir Edward. " Mr. Delmaine's servant waits for an answer, sir."

At the name of Delmaine, Helen raised her eyes. She wondered what the note could contain, glanced at the superscription as it lay on the table before Sir Edward, who was searching in his pocket for his spectacles, and fancied it an age before he opened it.

At length the seal was broken, the baronet read it attentively to himself, and then aloud. " What is the meaning of all this?" he exclaimed, when he had finished it. " Stanley, can you give me any clue;—do you know any thing of this circumstance?"

Helen had been evidently moved during the reading of the note; the colonel observed it, and looked displeased.

" I rather think I can explain the motive for this note," he replied, " but in a very different manner. Helen, when you have finished your breakfast, I will thank you to leave Sir Edward and myself together for a few minutes."

" Humph!" ejaculated the baronet, secretly vexed, and preparing himself for some unpleasant communication. Helen swallowed her coffee, though not without difficulty, and, rising slowly from the table, left the apartment.

A momentary silence succeeded to her departure. The baronet was afraid to allude to a subject, which, from the formal manner of his friend, he felt satisfied would prove of an unpleasant nature; the colonel also seemed to wait until he should be questioned, but finding that Sir Edward continued silent, he said,

" You cannot but be aware, Delmaine, of the partial

intimacy which lately subsisted between Helen and your nephew."

"Aware!" interrupted Sir Edward, eagerly, "perfectly aware; nay, I have set my whole heart upon the match."

"Gently," said the colonel, "that match never can take place. I confess, myself, that I had hoped to have cemented our long friendship by a union between two beings so nearly connected with us."

"What reason can there possibly be then," again impatiently interrupted the baronet, "why it should not take place?—I do not understand these contradictions."

"I am sorry to tell you," rejoined the colonel, "what I know will give you pain to hear. Since his arrival in Paris, your nephew has formed some disreputable connexions, and especially an intimacy with an artful Frenchwoman; nay, he had the effrontery last evening to bring her to the theatre, and place her in the very box opposite to that we occupied."

Sir Edward looked surprised and disappointed. "But, my dear Stanley," he exclaimed, after a pause, "you know what young men are, particularly in such a place as Paris; and as for his appearing at the theatre with this woman, it must have been purely accidental."

"Had this been the case," returned the colonel, "I trust I am too little of a cynic not to have forgiven him; but I have reason to believe that the insult was pointed, and intentional."

"Nay, what possible motive can you have, Stanley, for entertaining such a belief?" inquired Sir Edward.

"This very morning I received an anonymous communication from a person professing to be a friend of the family; and although I seldom attach importance to information so conveyed, I confess that the purport of the note agrees too well with what actually passed under my own observation, to leave a doubt on my mind in regard to the veracity and disinterestedness of the writer. Perhaps," he continued, drawing the let-

ter from his pocket, and handing it to the baronet, "you would like to read it yourself."

Sir Edward took it, and read with attention the following extraordinary lines, which were evidently written in a disguised hand:

"A gentleman whose acquaintance with Colonel Stanley's family, though slight, is such as to induce feelings of indignation at any thing like insult offered to its members, feels it a duty to communicate a circumstance which occurred last evening at the *Opéra Comique*. Accident having thrown the writer into a remote part of the theatre, and in the same *loge* with a French lady and English gentleman, he could not avoid overhearing a conversation to the following purport. The lady, finding her situation unpleasant, proposed to her companion that they should descend from the third tier, where they were; to a vacant *loge* in the dress circle. The gentleman refused, alleging that the box immediately opposite was filled by some very particular friends, whom he feared to offend, by complying with her request; the lady immediately glanced in the direction alluded to, exclaiming, '*Ah, je la connais cette dame, c'est votre belle Anglaise, maintenant j'insiste que vous me conduisiez vis-à-vis d'elle.*' She then rose to depart. Again the Englishman remonstrated and refused, when the female declared that unless he conducted her to the box in question, she would instantly quit the theatre, and never behold him more—this threat had the effect desired, and they retired together.

"In the course of a few minutes the writer of this communication, whose attention was attracted by the observations of the parties, recognised Colonel Stanley in the box alluded to. Soon afterwards he saw the lady and gentleman enter the vacant *loge* immediately opposite, where they did not, however, long remain. The writer is not aware who the gentleman was; but if Colonel Stanley remarked the entrance of any two such persons, in the course of the early part of the per-

formance, he will be aware of his identity. Anonymous communications are at all times to be lamented, but in this particular instance a necessity for secrecy is felt by the writer, who, it must be evident, can be actuated by no other feeling in making the present communication, than respect for the family of Colonel Stanley. The female in question had every appearance of being a person of doubtful character."

Sir Edward paused several times, during the perusal of this long epistle, on every line of which he lingered with painful earnestness, his usual ejaculation—humph! escaping him, as he came to those passages which accorded so completely with the communication of the colonel.

"Not a doubt of it," he at length exclaimed. "The fellow is going headlong to the devil. I now see that his story of a misunderstanding with Dormer, is all a pretence to avoid meeting those he has so deeply offended, and this is an additional proof of his guilt. Ah, Stanley, I was an old fool, to place so much reliance on his steadiness. I wish to God I had never come to Paris."

The tone of mingled anger and despondency in which the good old baronet uttered these unconnected sentences, deeply touched his friend. Incapable, however, of finding any excuse for the conduct of our hero, he continued silent.

"I could have forgiven any thing but this," pursued Sir Edward; "but thus to offer such an insult to Helen—to the woman whom I had hoped to have seen his wife! Stanley," he pursued, after a pause, "I fear this match can never be accomplished."

"Never," exclaimed the colonel, impressively.

"Enough," said the baronet, irritated as much by the severity of his friend's decision, as by the defection of his nephew: "I will never see him more." Then rising and approaching the bell, he rang it violently.

A servant instantly obeyed the summons.

"Bring me my portfolio," said the baronet.

In a few minutes the necessary apparatus was placed before him.

"Nay, but pause a moment," observed the colonel, as his friend commenced his answer; "you surely do not mean to forbid him your presence."

"But I do mean it," exclaimed Sir Edward; "so do not *now* talk to me of pausing, Stanley. All hopes of a match, on which I had set my heart, are at an end, through his folly, and I shall never forgive him."

The colonel made no further observation, but taking up a paper, occupied himself with its perusal; while Sir Edward, out of humour with himself, and the whole world, wrote the note we have already read.

In a few minutes it was sealed and despatched, when the baronet, fatigued with his exertion, and in a half melancholy, half angry mood, threw himself into his *fauteuil*, where, leaning his head on his hand, he continued for some hours, plunged in a painful reverie.

Meanwhile Miss Stanley, on leaving the breakfast table, had retired to her music-room; but it was in vain that she endeavoured to apply herself to some new and difficult air of Rossini's. Her thoughts perpetually wandered to the occurrences of the last evening; and she reflected with bitterness and indignation on the mortification she had experienced. Notwithstanding the numerous failings of Delmaine, she could not conceal from herself that she loved him; and though his singular recent estrangement from the society of his friends, had of late caused her to fear that he was indulging in excesses, and yielding to the temptations which every where beset him, hers were feelings and affections not to be warped even by the conviction of such facts: for, relying on his good sense and discrimination, she felt, that whatever momentary aberration he might be guilty of, he would finally perceive and redeem his errors.

It may shock our readers to learn that a heroine could even imagine infidelity on the part of her lover—and of course such a thing was never known before—yet so it

was in this instance. Miss Stanley was a woman of strong mind, and had all the passion of love, without any of its romance. She felt, moreover, that it was very possible for a man to form temporary connexions, where the senses only were interested, and yet entertain an exclusive affection for a virtuous woman. The conduct of Delmaine, therefore, though it had given her pain, had by no means induced a doubt of that attachment which his manner and actions so unequivocally expressed. The word Love, it is true, had never once escaped the lips of either, but it was absurd to suppose, that where the heart spoke in every action, the mere declaration of attachment could be considered indispensable. The openness and generosity of his character, she well knew, rendered him liable to temptation ; and she was also aware that, when tempted, his amiability of disposition with women, rendered him equally liable to fall ; but, strange to say, she secretly determined this to be rather a virtue than failing ; or, if a failing, one that might easily be pardoned, since it was a pledge of that tenderness of nature of which she had confidence enough to believe she could, in the event of their future union, exclusively possess herself.

That Sir Edward and her father had both regarded the intimacy which subsisted between them, with a favourable eye, was sufficiently evident. It is true Delmaine's repeated absence of late, from their little circle, had not been unobserved by the latter ; but Helen knew that her father, as a soldier, and as a man of the world, possessed too much liberality of nature to construe into slight for her, a conduct that was merely the result of circumstances, and facility of attainment in pleasure.

There was but one person whom she seriously apprehended, and with whom it would have given her pain to know that Delmaine had formed even an acquaintance ; that individual was the Frenchwoman he had rescued from impending death on the Boulevard. The moment Helen first beheld her, she felt and acknowledged the power of fascination which such a woman must pos-

sess over a being so completely glowing with feeling as our hero. The first pang of jealousy she had ever known was on that occasion ; yet, even while pained by her presence, she had been completely won by the interesting style of her beauty. During the first few days that had succeeded to this meeting, she had repeatedly dwelt on the subject, and formed various conjectures as to who she could be, and whether there was any probability of Clifford meeting her in society. As, however, she never appeared in the circles they frequented, these reflections gradually subsided, and with them disappeared, in a great measure, the image of the young Frenchwoman.

Hitherto the dereliction of Delmaine had only consisted in his not appearing so frequently as usual at the Hôtel Mirabeau—a positive engagement he had never refused:—it was reserved for the evening of Astelli's party, not simply to decline, but to break one already entered into. The party to the opera had been planned some days before, and Helen, in a playful manner, and in the presence of Dormer, had made Clifford positively promise not to engage himself elsewhere. When, however, his note of apology arrived on that day, she felt pained and disappointed. Then it was that she first began to doubt both her own power and the sincerity of his attachment. The colonel also was evidently offended, although he made no remark, and that feeling was yet powerful in his mind, when Delmaine called on the following morning. With a heart ill at ease, and under the influence of an unusual sensation of despondency, Helen had accepted the challenge of Sir Edward to a game of chess, during which, and prior to the entrance of our hero, a painful silence had prevailed, only occasionally interrupted by the languid and unconnected remarks of Dormer and the colonel.

It was this air of reserve that startled Clifford as something unusual, and calling forth a corresponding coolness, had induced his early and formal departure from a house where he was led both by his extreme

susceptibility, and a painful consciousness of error, to imagine he was no longer welcome. A sickness stole over the heart of Helen as he left the room, for she clearly perceived under what feelings and impressions he acted; and the affected indifference she had momentarily assumed in her conversation with Dormer at once deserted her. The colonel remarked the change, and, anxious to divert her attention, expressed a desire to dine at a restaurateur's, and to go from thence to one of the theatres. To this arrangement she reluctantly consented, for she was well aware that her father's proposal originated wholly in consideration for her; and Dormer, on being referred to, named Beauvillier's, as the best place to dine. We have already described the unexpected manner in which Helen first encountered Delmaine and his companion; but we should vainly attempt to describe the feelings by which she was assailed. Had it not been for the support afforded her by Dormer, she would have fallen. Her presence of mind, however, was almost immediately recovered, and she moved quickly forward to prevent a recognition on the part of her father, who, she felt satisfied, had not noticed Clifford. In her wretched state of feeling, she would have returned home; but a disinclination to betray the full extent of her mortification, even to Dormer, prevented her.

If the heart of Helen was thus deeply wounded by the *rencontre* at the restaurateur's, what must she not have experienced when she beheld our hero entering the *loge* of the Feydeau, accompanied by the very woman with whom she could least endure the idea of his having formed an intimacy. In the confusion of her thoughts, she had obtained but an indistinct view of Adeline at Beauvillier's; but now that she was ushered in amid the glaring light of the theatre, she could not for a moment be deceived. Sick and disappointed, she turned her head away; but, inheriting all the pride of her father, she felt the necessity for subduing her feeling. A look from the colonel, whose brow had been

gradually darkening since the entrance of Clifford, encouraged her in the exertion, and she finally acquired sufficient resolution to examine the features of the female, which then appeared to her even more lovely and fascinating than ever. Her eyes once met those of Delmaine; but his were instantly lowered beneath her glance: and there was so much confusion in his manner, so much restraint in his action, that she was satisfied he was far from being at his ease; when he left the theatre, she actually felt for his situation.

In vain did she torture herself, to discover by what accident he had renewed his acquaintance with the interesting Frenchwoman; nor was it until after his departure, that she learnt, from the observations of De Forsac, the true motive which had induced Clifford to break the engagement of the preceding evening. Her feelings, on retiring to rest that evening, may easily be conceived; but, whatever might be the strength of her affection, her sense of the indignity offered her was not inferior, and, for the first time, she was now seriously offended with our hero. On the following morning, while waiting for Sir Edward to join them in the breakfast room, the anonymous letter was brought to the colonel, who, after reading it attentively, handed it to her. Helen perused it with a calmness that surprised him, and without any apparent emotion.

"Though I hate anonymous communications," she observed, folding and returning the letter, "there can be but little doubt, I fancy, in regard to the truth of this. The writer, however, seems to be a very officious sort of person, and evidently but too anxious to impart his information."

"There I perfectly agree with you," rejoined the colonel; "but that is not the point. It is sufficient for us to know, that the facts are such as are here described. How then have you resolved to act, Helen?"

"Can you deem such a question necessary, my father!" said Helen, faintly colouring.

"Dear, proud girl," cried the colonel, pressing her

to his heart, and imprinting a kiss upon her brow—
“No; such a question cannot be necessary, since I feel that you will never act in a manner unworthy either of your father, or of yourself.”

The entrance of the baronet at this moment interrupted their conversation.

But although Helen had determined on the conduct to be pursued, she could not wholly subdue her feelings; and while her fingers wandered unconsciously over the keys of her piano, her thoughts lingered on the interesting and agreeable moments she had passed in the society of our hero, between whom and herself an insuperable barrier had thus suddenly been raised. A variety of feelings agitated her bosom, and she felt pained even unto despondency. The entrance of Dormer gave a relief to her reflections; but only inasmuch as she felt the necessity for excitement in his presence, for in his countenance she read a confirmation of her worst apprehensions.

“Well, I have seen him,” he observed, with a sort of dogged air, drawing a chair close to the instrument, and taking her hand; “but such is his infatuation”—

“Say no more, my kind friend,” interrupted Helen; “I know it all; and though I may be weak enough to feel hurt at his conduct, I have also too much pride to forgive it easily.”

“How delighted I am to hear this avowal of your sentiments,” returned Dormer. “The fact is, that Delmaine is utterly unworthy of your regard, and even I have no more hope left of his amendment. He has suffered himself to be made a complete dupe. But how can you possibly have gained your information?”

Helen then acquainted him with the circumstance of the anonymous communication. “You see,” she added, when she had finished the detail, “that some parts of it agree with what actually passed under our own observation.”

“True,” said Dormer, musing, “yet I have my doubts on the subject. I can scarcely believe that Clif-

ford, however weak and culpable, could thus have been led into the commission of such intentional insult. This is in unison with the rest of the plot ; and I think I can say with certainty, that I know the author of this communication."

"What plot?" inquired Helen, with earnestness: "and who is the author? what do you mean, Dormer?"

Her friend then related the conversation he had overheard the preceding evening. Helen was thunderstruck at the intelligence, but now that the veil was removed, she thought she could trace a thousand circumstances, confirmatory of the several facts he detailed. A new feeling of hope sprang up in her bosom: for, convinced within herself that Delmaine had only fallen into a toil which had been artfully spread for him, and that his conduct had simply been the result of circumstances, she felt more inclined to forgive him. It was the humiliating thought that he could have been induced, in compliance with the caprices of an artful woman, to offer a wanton outrage to her feelings, that had almost struck at the root of her affection; but now that she saw a probability of this assertion proving false, the weight which had lingered at her heart was gradually dissipating, and she felt more disposed to find excuses for the general tenor of his conduct.

"Good Heavens! you astonish me, Dormer," she at length observed: "can the elegant and accomplished De Forsac really prove such a villain? and may we hope that the errors of Delmaine are only to be ascribed to him?"

Dormer remarked the change which had been thus rapidly operated in her feelings; he recollected the declaration made by Clifford, that Adeline Dorjeville was under his protection, and he shook his head, as if in doubt.

"I am afraid," he returned, "that Delmaine has but too willingly fallen into the snares of the marquis; and I wish—dearest Helen, forgive me if I seem presump-

tuous—but I wish you could think less favourably of him than you do.”

“Dormer,” she returned, with energy, while a deep glow suffused her cheek, “I know—I feel all the interest you take in my happiness. It would be useless to deny my attachment for Clifford; yet, believe me, I shall never be so silly as to cherish a sentiment of tenderness for a man who evidently prefers another. It appears to me, however, that you view the dereliction of your friend in rather too unfriendly a light. Delmaine has generous, has noble feelings; and though he may yield to a temporary infatuation, when he once awakens from the delusion into which he has, perhaps, somewhat voluntarily fallen, depend upon it, it will be effectually, and to a proper sense of what is due not only to himself but to his friends.”

Dormer gazed at her as she spoke, with a blended feeling of pain and interest; but the annoyance he momentarily felt at his rather severe though indirect reproof, passed away as a shadow, and left him open to the operation of more generous impressions. He could not but admire the firmness and constancy of an attachment, which nothing but positive proof of degradation, or insulting unkindness, could weaken; and he more than ever regretted the folly of his friend.

“Dearest Helen!” he exclaimed, “these sentiments are indeed worthy of yourself. Heaven grant that Delmaine may speedily awaken from his illusion, and experience the true happiness which must arise from the possession of a woman gifted with so generous and affectionate a mind.”

Helen pressed his hand in silence. “Will it not be well,” she inquired, “to communicate to my father what you have just disclosed to me? He also, in consequence of the anonymous letter, entertains an erroneous impression, and as he feels highly offended at the conduct of Clifford, I could wish him to be undeceived.”

“Not yet,” returned Dormer: “as your father entertains the highest opinion of De Forsac, he might feel

inclined to palliate any charges that should be advanced against him; let us, therefore, keep this circumstance a secret for the present. When he has once done you the honour to propose for you, which undoubtedly he will condescend to do, the colonel will better understand why a motive for artifice should have existed."

To this Helen assented; and Dormer having promised to avail himself of the first opportunity for reconciliation with his friend, was about to follow her into the next apartment, when the violent ringing of the bell suddenly arrested them.

"What is the matter now?" he demanded, lingering near the entrance of the music-room; "Is it Sir Edward's or the colonel's impatience that is thus manifested in a peal which, I will venture to say, was never before rung in the Hôtel Mirabeau."

Helen hesitated also. "Heaven only knows," she replied: "all that I am aware of is, that I received a hint from my father, to retire from the breakfast-table, as he wished to have some private conversation with Sir Edward. By the bye," she pursued, after a moment's pause, "the subject, I fancy, relates to Clifford: Sir Edward this morning received a note from him, stating, that he had had a slight misunderstanding with you—is this really the case?"

"Misunderstanding!" echoed Dormer, impatiently; "why, it certainly was a misunderstanding, if by that is meant a determination not to come to an understanding at all. I can scarcely bear to think of his haughty and overbearing conduct. I went to him this morning, with all the freedom of manner and warmth of feeling that I had ever entertained, yet I could have almost fancied myself in the presence of the Great Mogul. When I offered my hand, he drew himself back with an air of insufferable dignity, and, to the familiar appellation of Delmaine, replied, 'Mr. Delmaine, sir, if you please.' In short, he so annoyed me by his formality at one moment, and his warmth of opposition to any attempt at accusation against De Forsac at another, that

I left him in a rage ; and, to tell you the truth, were it not for the strong friendship which I entertain for you, I do not think I should ever venture near him again."

"Nay, my dear Dormer," exclaimed Helen, who had vainly attempted to suppress a smile, as in imagination she beheld the singular interview of the two friends, "be not seriously angry with him ; you may be assured that his conduct originated altogether in pique, and that he was just as much annoyed as you could possibly be. I have observed a coolness between you, latterly, and am quite satisfied that Clifford has secretly taxed you with some fault, of which, I dare say, you are entirely innocent."

"Yet what could be his motive," pursued Dormer, "for acquainting Sir Edward with the circumstance ? This is what I cannot understand."

"Why, you must know," said Helen, "that he makes this a plea for not visiting his uncle, as he says he is certain of meeting you with us, and that such a meeting might be unpleasant to both parties. His real motive is, however, evident : after the events of last evening, he naturally dreads a meeting with my father and myself. His excuse is weak : but did you ever know a man conscious of wrong, who could offer a good one ?"

"Now, then, I understand," replied Dormer. "But what answer has Sir Edward returned, or has he returned any at all ?"

"That I cannot possibly say," resumed Helen. "It was almost immediately after the arrival of his note, that I received my *congé*."

"As this, then, seems to be a family consultation-day," said Dormer, "I think I shall leave you."

"Will you not wait, and hear the result ?" inquired Helen. "I dare say we shall be let into the secret."

"Oh, by no means !" exclaimed Dormer ; "that peal of the bell has quite disconcerted me. I would not face the angry mood of him who pulled it, for the world."

"And so you intend to leave me to bear the shock ! Well, this is not particularly friendly, I must confess,

Mr. Dormer," replied Helen, with an affectation of pique.

"But why remain alone? Or is it too unfashionable an hour for you to venture forth?"

"An excellent idea," rejoined Helen; "it will be much better employment than torturing this piece of music. But where shall we go? It is too early for visiting—too unfashionable either for the Tuileries or for the Champs Elysées—and certainly too far for the Jardin des Plantes. Can you think of no other place?"

"Suppose we venture as far as the Bosquets of the Tivoli? The distance is not very great; and the beauty of the garden will repay you for the walk."

To this Helen assented; and, having thrown on her hat and shawl, and left word for the colonel where she was gone, she sallied forth on her ramble.

Delmaine, in the mean time, had repaired to the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, where the grateful Adeline was awaiting his return, with feelings of unmixed tenderness and pleasure. Never had she appeared more affectionate than at the moment of his re-appearance, and in the warmth of her reception, he endeavoured to forget the annoyances by which he was assailed. Her large blue eyes were moist with tears; but they were tears produced by the very calm and abandonment of her feelings.

Clifford had nearly forgotten the whole world in the ardour of his admiration, when a slight tap at the door of the apartment recalled him from his trance. In the next instant, Madame Dorjeville entered. She seemed surprised at his presence, and made a movement to retire. Adeline sprang from the sofa, and with a "*Bonjour, Maman,*" threw her arms round her neck, and kissed her. Her dress was disordered, her hair loose, and her countenance highly flushed. This did not escape the observation of her mother.

"*Il paraît que je suis de trop,*" she observed, with an air of unconcern. "*Je me retire.*"

"*Du tout, Maman,*" returned Adeline, seizing her

hand, and conducting her to the couch. "*C'est seulement Monsieur Delmaine, qui a eu la bonté de venir me rendre visite.*"

Madame Dorjeville now, for the first time, seemed fully to recognise her *compagnon de voyage*. She apologized for the delay she had made in returning the obligation she was under to him; and after making some futile excuse about forgetting his place of residence, put her hand into her reticule, as if in search of her purse.

As she well knew, however, that there was no purse there, and after searching, in vain, for five minutes, she exclaimed—" *Mais, mon Dieu, est-il possible? j'ai laissé ma bourse, et j'ai un paiement à faire sur le champ, Adeline, ma fille, prêtez moi trois cents francs; je te les rendrai ce soir.*"

"*Heureusement je les ai, Maman,*" cried Adeline, casting a look of tender acknowledgment on Clifford, as she rose and went to an inner apartment.

In a few minutes she returned, saying that she had sent a note out to be changed.

"It will be too late," cried Madame Dorjeville, with vivacity. "Have you no gold whatever by you? How unfortunate!" she pursued, as Adeline shook her head in reply.

Delmaine's hand was on the purse which contained his *rouleau* of Napoleons. The stage coach incidents occurred to him, and he hesitated. He looked at Adeline; her eyes were tenderly riveted on his, and he decided. His hand glided from his purse to his note-case. He took it from his pocket, and selecting a five hundred franc note, handed it to Madame Dorjeville.

"As you are in a hurry," he observed, "perhaps you will permit me to become your banker for the moment."

"Oh, impossible!" exclaimed Madame Dorjeville. "I cannot think of such a thing. Recollect, Mr. Delmaine, that I am in your debt already." Yet her hand lingered on the note, in a way that implied how delight-

ed she should feel to have it forced upon her acceptance.

"Nay," said Clifford, abandoning it to her grasp. "you will really oblige me by taking it."

"Well, I suppose I must accept it. Adeline, I shall send you the money, and you must repay Mr. Delmaine for me. Now, then, I am off. This person is so particular about his payments. *A propos, ma fille,*" she added, as she rose to leave the room, "*que fais-tu ce soir?*"

"*Mais rien, Maman—fait-on quelque chose?*"

"*Ne sais-tu pas que c'est la soirée de Madame Bourdeaux? Ensuite, il y aura bal masqué chez Frascati.*"

Adeline looked at Clifford, and smiled. "You know you are particularly engaged," she remarked. "How do you feel disposed?"

"I am ready to do whatever you please," he replied.

"Well, then, suppose we go? *C'est une affaire faite,*" she pursued, as she read his assent in his countenance.

"*A ce soir, donc,*" said Madame Dorjeville. "*Adieu, Adeline—bon jour, Monsieur Delmaine,*" and she quitted the apartment with a face beaming with smiles, and a step as light as that of a young fawn.

Adeline moved towards the window; Delmaine followed, and threw his arm around her waist.

"Adieu!" said Madame Dorjeville, a moment afterwards, kissing her hand to them from the street.

"Adieu," replied Adeline.

The voices attracted the attention of a lady and gentleman who were walking on the opposite side. They looked up at the window of the apartment.

"*Voyez!*" said Adeline, involuntarily, and starting from his embrace.

Clifford looked, and felt all his assumed gayety of heart vanish into air, as he beheld Miss Stanley and Frederick Dormer!

CHAPTER XIII.

THE scene which met the gaze of our hero, at the handsome hotel of Madame Bourdeaux, was nearly similar to that which he had witnessed at Astelli's. The only difference was, that there was no dancing, and that the costume of the visitors was less brilliant, and the preparations for their reception less *recherchées*. Yet every where, the same bustle and excitement were discernible; and so eagerly engaged in play were the numerous groups scattered throughout the apartments, that his presence was for some time unnoticed even by the mistress of the establishment herself. The countenance of each individual wore a peculiar expression of selfishness; a thirst for gain seemed to be the leading stimulus to exertion; and even the common courtesies of life were occasionally forgotten in the anxiety and impatience manifested by players of both sexes. An angry feeling pervaded the breasts of the losers against those who were more fortunate; and discussions frequently took place between the opposing parties, which of course seldom terminated to the satisfaction of both.

Ladies, whose smiles had recently been lavished on attentive cavaliers, now frowned upon them, as they perceived that their interests were embarked in the opposite scale; and men whose lips had only the moment before given utterance to sounds of tenderness and admiration, scrupled not to take every advantage over their fair, but no less interested antagonists. Age and decrepitude here suffered the remnant of their strength to be wasted and lost in the clamorous appeals of the more youthful; while in the half-sunken eye, imbedded in film, and rolling anxiously in its socket, and in the shrivelled, bony, palsied hand, eagerly stretched forth

to grasp a solitary franc stake, might be traced the yet vigorous existence of a passion, which even the terrors of impending death could not extinguish or restrain.

This was a scene which might be viewed, abstractedly, as well by the young as by the old, by the thoughtless as well as by the reflecting, not only without danger, but with advantage. But, unhappily for all parties, neither the unamiable anxiety manifested by the young players, nor the sordid and more disgusting selfishness of the aged, was likely to occupy their attention, where beauty of person, brilliancy of wit, and fascination of manner, were so well calculated to throw a veil over the imperfections of the former; while the more glaring avarice of the latter excited no profounder sentiments than those of derision and amusement. It was, moreover, curious to observe the changes operated in the feelings of individuals, as the fluctuations of the game caused them to espouse opposite sides. How different were the impressions of two beings, whose intimacy was ripening into a warmer feeling, when betting on the same hand, and when embracing adverse sides! The antipodes were not more opposite. Of this many of the more experienced among the men were sufficiently aware, and no one who sought to win the favour of the lady of his choice, would have dreamt of opposing himself to her at play: thus proving that selfishness is ever, and to a certain extent, the secret spring of all our actions, and verifying a remark which we have read in an unpretending production of the day, that

“Man loves but self in all he seems to love.”

Never had Delmaine been more in the humour to seize the less amiable features of the scene before him. Leaving Adeline loitering near a table, he threw himself on a vacant ottoman, and casting his eyes rapidly over the various groups of players, he followed for a time the action of the several passions upon each. An old man, nearly eighty years of age, dressed in a drab-coloured coat, and decorated with a red ribband, sat at

the table opposite to him. His person was emaciated, and his appearance altogether such as we have generally described above. The game had just terminated, and the spoil, for such it might be called, was eagerly claimed and shared by the winners. The feeble voice of the aged gambler had been drowned in the numerous applications made by the more active and robust of lungs; but his withered hands were still stretched out in violent action for his claim. At length, every other demand having been paid, and every tongue of course silent for the moment, the winning player inquired "what he wanted?"

"*Il me faut deux francs, Monsieur,*" said the old man, in a shrill tremulous voice, and coughing faintly from the bottom of his chest.

"*Mais, Monsieur, il ne me reste plus d'argent,*" was the reply; "*J'ai tout payé.*"

"*Je ne saurais perdre ma mise,*" said the dotard, trembling like an aspen leaf. "*J'ai mis un franc, et je dois en recevoir deux. Madame,*" turning to an old woman at his side, nearly as aged as himself, "*vous l'avez bien vu.*"

"*Oui, Monsieur, vous avez assurément mis une pièce de vingt sous,*" squeaked the withered female appealed to.

"*Comment faire?*" said the player originally called on for the stake, "*je ne puis rendre compte de toutes les mises.*"

"*Tenez, Monsieur,*" said a young woman, richly attired, who had just lost a very large stake, and who, in her eagerness to commence another game, was now desirous that the discussion should cease: "*voici deux francs; je vous en fais cadeau; et maintenant que vous avez reçu votre mise, le conseil que je vous donne, c'est de vous retirer. Un bon lit vous serait plus salutaire à votre âge que le tumulte de ce salon.*"

A general tittering succeeded to this excellent advice, but the *vieillard* seemed to have formed a different opinion on the subject. In no way discouraged by the

lecture, he turned to his female companion, and with a ghastly smile, exclaimed—

“*Vous voyez, Madame, ce que c'est que la persévérance;*” then, holding out one of the francs, which he had unhesitatingly accepted, and addressing the dealer, “*Tenez, Monsieur; voyez bien cette fois—j'ai une mise de vingt sous.*”

Again the party around the table began to titter; and the dealer, taking the franc out of his palsied hand, held it contemptuously between his fore-finger and thumb, asking with a sneer,

“*Qui tiendra cette pièce de vingt sous?*”

“*Personne,*” some one answered from the opposite side.

“*Vous voyez, Monsieur,*” said the dealer, returning the money, “*on ne le tient pas—il faut le retirer.*”

“*Mais, mon Dieu, c'est unique,*” exclaimed the old man, in a rage, “*qu'on ne veut pas tenir seulement une pièce de vingt sous—Je ne jouerai plus ici.*”

Another laugh followed this threat, as the disappointed Chevalier, for such he was, rose from his seat, and, supporting his emaciated frame on a rich old-fashioned gold-headed cane, moved towards a distant table.

“Thank God, he is gone,” said the female, who had given him the amount of his contested stake; he does nothing but interrupt the game, and take up all the space with his paltry twenty-sous stakes. Would you believe,” she said, turning to a lady, who sat next to her, “that this old fellow, who spends night after night in the different *salons*, winning or losing a few paltry écus, is worth at least half a million of francs!”

“*Oh, Dieu, est-il possible? Si je les avais moi! Ne pourrait-on pas emprunter quelques billets de mille francs? Est-il garçon?—A-t-il une fille à marier?*” were among the numerous exclamations which burst from the lips of those around, at the announcement of this intelligence.

“*Comme tout ce bavardage retard le jeu,*” half murmured a voice close to the ear of our hero, in an angry

tone. He turned round, and recognised Madame Bourdeaux, who sat tapping her foot on the floor with a movement of impatience, as she perceived the delay thus occasioned in the game. An ivory counter was in her hand—in a moment of fretfulness, she snapped it in two, and flung the pieces away with an air of humour.

“*Madame, c’est à vous à couper,*” at length remarked the dealer to his adversary. This put an end to the conversation; the cards were cut, and the game again commenced. The frown passed away from Madame Bourdeaux’s brow, like an April cloud from before the sun, and she turned, and saluted Delmaine in her most courteous manner. Alive, however, to what was passing, her vigilant eye was every where, and in the next instant she rose to drop a counter at a distant table, where a game was just terminated.

From the table which the old man had just quitted, our hero cast his eye upon the next; his glance was cursory, but it at length fell upon an object well calculated to claim a more than ordinary degree of attention. At the further extremity, and immediately facing him, sat a woman, apparently about eight and twenty years of age; her eyes were large, dark and languishing; her hair, surmounted by a white velvet toque, looped with diamonds, was of a death-black colour, and hung in luxuriant curls on either side, leaving exposed to view a forehead of snowy whiteness, intersected by veins of the most transparent blue. She wore a low dress of satin, similar in colour to her toque, and bordered on the top with a rich *blonde*, which alone marked the point of division between the splendid material and the still more splendid bosom it but imperfectly veiled. Her figure evidently inclined to the *embonpoint*, though it was chastened and robbed of all appearance of heaviness by the svelte proportions of her waist. Her arms, naked nearly to the shoulders, and of dazzling fairness, also betrayed a variety of rich blue veins through their transparent surface; the left hung negligently in her

lap ; the right leaned on the back of a gentleman's chair, who sat next to her ; while the delicate white hand by which it was terminated, played with the tresses that wanted over her rich dark cheek.

When Clifford first beheld this lady, her eyes were fixed upon him, with that softness and languor for which they were so remarkable. He gazed for a moment, and the blood rushed violently into his face, for he had encountered an expression which he deeply felt, but could not analyze. The cheek of the stranger also became suffused with a deeper glow. She closed her eyes tremulously before his—opened them again with the same singular expression—and then, turning to the gentleman on whose chair she leaned, whispered something in his ear. Delmaine followed the direction of her glance, and, to his surprise, beheld De Forsac, whom hitherto he had not noticed. The marquis looked towards him, waved his hand, and nodded and smiled his recognition. He then resumed his original position, and seemed entirely absorbed in the game on which he was betting ; the female also resumed hers ; her glances were frequent, and wore the same languishing character. Insensibly, those of Delmaine became impassioned ; his cheek was more highly flushed, and his hand was already on its way to his lips, when a voice at his side startled and recalled him to his senses.

"*Hé bien ! mon ami, que fais-tu là tout seul ?*" inquired Adeline, for it was her.

"*Je joue le rôle d'observateur,*" he replied, with an attempt at indifference ; but the excitement of his feelings was yet too forcibly marked on his countenance not to be detected.

"*Voyons,*" she exclaimed, with apparent playfulness, but with secret anxiety ; "*voyons le sujet de vos réflexions ;*" and, seating herself at his side, she turned her eyes in the direction in which he had been gazing. Glancing rapidly among the group at the table, she soon distinguished the beautiful stranger ; their eyes met, and the colour receded from the cheeks of both.

In the next instant the stranger rose from her seat, and stood looking over the hand of one of the players; Delmaine could not avoid following the movement with his eyes, and glancing rapidly over the rich proportions of her figure.

"*Viens-tu de faire les yeux doux à cette dame?*" demanded Adeline, still pale, and in a voice broken by emotion.

Delmaine felt her hand tremble as he took it. "*Mais non, chère amie, pourquoi me demande tu cela?*"

"*Oh, je ne sais pas,*" she exclaimed, "*mais je la crains tant cette femme; on la dit l'être le plus séducteur du monde; promets-moi que tu ne fera jamais sa connaissance.*"

"*Je te le promets,*" rejoined Clifford; "*je ne le ferai pas;*" and as he spoke, he glanced furtively at the stranger. Her gaze again met his, and with the same exciting expression that he had previously encountered. At that moment he felt how vain must prove the promise he had just given, were an opportunity but afforded him, and he shuddered at his duplicity.

Unwilling, however, to give pain to Adeline by even an appearance of interest in the stranger, he sauntered with her towards a distant table, where a group of very high players were watching the result of a game with anxious and silent interest. Among the rest was Madame Dorjeville; her cheek was highly flushed, and, from the agitation of her manner, it was evident to our hero that fortune was against her; she lost the *partie*, and immediately occupying the seat which had been vacated by the unsuccessful player, drew forth her purse with a trembling hand, and emptied its contents upon the table. Adeline remarked her excitement; and, approaching, whispered, what it was evident, from the answer, was a remonstrance against the folly of risking so much gold on a single game, especially as the *veine* was so completely established on the opposite side.

"*Tu m'ennuye, ma fille,*" she exclaimed, with a

movement of impatience ; “ *laissez-moi faire, je n’ai pas besoin de tes conseils.*”

Adeline sighed and withdrew. She looked at Delmaine, as if to observe the impression produced on him by the conduct of her mother.

The game was soon terminated, and, as she had apprehended, in favour of the adverse party. Madame Dorjeville rose abruptly from her seat, and exclaiming, with a bitter laugh, “ *Dieu merci, je n’ai plus un sou,*” threw herself on a *canapé* at some little distance, where her impatience and ill humour broke forth in occasional invective against the unlucky run of the *maudites cartes*, the *veine assommante* of the adverse party, and the folly of attending to the *conseils* of advisers, who knew nothing whatever of the game. When she had exhausted her spleen in this manner, she beckoned to Adeline, and a low, but animated conversation ensued between them. Clifford observed, that the manner of the young girl was that of supplication and remonstrance, while that of her mother appeared determined and peremptory. At length, Madame Dorjeville, smoothing her brow, and moving with an air of *nonchalance*, came up and asked him to lend her fifteen or twenty pieces, with which, she said, she hoped to regain her losses. Our hero immediately took twenty pieces of gold from his purse, and handed them to her, though, while he did so, he could not avoid calling to mind the period when he had hesitated to offer her even half that sum, and for a much more virtuous purpose. But Madame Dorjeville was not then known to him as the mother of his mistress, and even he, generous as he was by nature, was not altogether insensible to considerations of self in his intercourse with the world ; the next moment saw her, radiant in smiles, and confident of success, seated once more at the *écarté* table, and Delmaine turned away with a feeling of disgust.

He threw himself again upon the ottoman he had previously occupied, and was indulging in no very pleasing reflections, when two young Englishmen sat down be-

side him. They were conversing about the beautiful stranger.

"She is certainly a most superb creature," said one. "Do you know who she is?"

"Never saw her before to-night," was the reply; "but see, that fellow, De Forsac, is laying close siege to her—that man is my horror."

"What! jealous, Widewood? Can you, who possess a golden key to the hearts of half the Parisian women, possibly be jealous of this broken-down marquis? They say your boudoir is like the harem of the Grand Turk."

"Not absolutely jealous," replied the other, carelessly, "but such is the plausibility of manner, that he is said to get hold of every woman worth looking at, before another man has time to commence his approaches. By the way, Randall, how is Clémence?"

The female now alluded to had been a *chère amie* of De Forsac. Randall knew it, and took the question as it was intended, though without appearing to show that he did so.

"She was very well this morning, when we parted for ever," he replied. "I suppose you are not aware that we have cut the concern."

"Not I, indeed—how is this—jealousy, infidelity, or what?"

"Neither," resumed Randall; "but latterly her *mémoires* came tumbling in so thick whenever I was with her, that I was even compelled to quarrel with her in self-defence. She always made it a practice to have her bills sent in at those moments when she expected I should be with her, and I, of course, could not do less than pay them; but finding that my finances were getting to a very low ebb in consequence of these repeated drains, I yesterday made up my mind to stop payment, as old Lafitte would say. Well—will you believe it?—while I was with her this morning, a *mémoire* nearly as long as my arm was produced. As usual, she expected that I should inquire what it was, but I very coolly helped myself to coffee, and took no notice of it. This, however,

did not suit Mademoiselle Clémence. When she found that I was resolved not to see it, she, without any ceremony, handed the bill over to me, and requested that I would pay it."

"Which you were silly enough to do, of course," interrupted Widewood.

"Not I, faith; for on looking at the sum total, as they call it, I found it to exceed a thousand francs, and I had lost too much money the night before to think of paying even a tenth part of that amount; I therefore told her without any ceremony, that I had no more money. She insisted—called me a shabby Englishman—and, in short, went on at such a rate, that I took up my hat and walked out, telling her, at the same time, that I should never see her again. She very politely opened the door of the *antichambre* for me with her own hands, and shut it with violence the instant I reached the staircase."

Delmaine thought of the breakfast scene which had occurred between Adeline and himself that very morning, and he shuddered to think that the discovery of the *mémoire* might not have been purely accidental.

"You must be some hundreds minus, through Clémence, if I have understood rightly," observed Widewood; "but do you know it is said that De Forsac makes many of these women supply him with sums obtained from the Englishmen to whom he introduces them? By-the-bye, do you see that young girl?"

Here their conversation was interrupted by the approach of Madame Bourdeaux, who requested one of them to take a vacant seat at an *écarté* table, where a player was wanted. Delmaine had unavoidably heard the whole of their remarks; and when he caught the last unfinished sentence, his heart beat with violence.—"What young girl can they possibly mean?" he asked himself, and he dreaded that some fearful disclosure was about to be made. Yet, this was better than uncertainty, and he hoped that the young men would decline the invitation, and renew their conversation; but, much to his disappointment, they both rose and joined in the

game. He cursed Madame Bourdeaux from his heart for the interruption, and moved almost mechanically towards the seat occupied by Adeline. As he passed the table where De Forsac had continued seated during the evening, he saw the stranger wrapped in a large cashmere shawl, and preparing to depart. The marquis also had his hat in his hand, and was only awaiting the termination of the game then playing, to accompany her.

"Do you go to Frascati's to-night?" he inquired.

Our hero had only the instant before made up his mind not to go; but the eyes of the stranger were at that moment fixed upon him with the same exciting expression; and he fancied that a slight motion of the head indicated a desire that he should.

"I rather think I shall," he replied; and he looked to observe the effect produced by this decision.

The stranger smiled, and disclosing a set of teeth of exquisite beauty, asked De Forsac if his friend would not accompany them.

The marquis looked displeased, and whispered some observation, in a low tone, to her; then turning to Clifford, he inquired if Adeline was with him, and whether she intended to accompany him?

Delmaine fastened his eyes keenly on the countenance of De Forsac, and for an instant changed colour, as the conversation of the two Englishmen occurred to him; but an inquiring movement of the stranger recalled him to himself. He said that Adeline was present, but he did not know whether she intended going to Frascati's or not; he, however, believed she would.

He looked again at the stranger, but the smile, which so recently played upon her lips, had given way to an expression of disappointment. Folding her shawl closely around her figure, she took the arm of De Forsac, who had just won his stake, and casting a final glance at our hero, perfectly indicative of a wish that he should go unaccompanied, left the apartment.

Conscious of the wrong he was half meditating to-

wards Adeline, Delmaine approached her with a feeling of reserve, which was not a little heightened by the recollection of the dialogue he had overheard, and which, in spite of himself, had made a deep impression on his mind. She was sitting pensively, with her attention evidently directed towards her mother, whose countenance but too faithfully betrayed the losses she was still sustaining.

"Do you care about going to Frascati's to-night?" he inquired, with assumed carelessness of manner, yet secretly trembling to hear her decision.

"Oh no," she exclaimed; "I have but little inclination to be even here to-night; and I sincerely wish that I was at home this very moment." She sighed.

Clifford was touched by her desponding manner, and—must we add?—pleased with her determination.

"What is the matter, Adeline? why are you so sad?"

"I am hurt, offended with mamma," she murmured. "You must think it so strange that she should borrow money from you, after the favour you conferred upon her this morning. Yet do not blame me," she pursued, feelingly; "I said all I could to dissuade her from it, but she would not listen to reason. She quarrelled with me; because I refused to ask you; but for worlds I could not have done so."

The suspicions which had arisen in the generous mind of our hero, were at once lulled by this artless confession, and he sought to remove every unpleasant feeling from her mind.

"A mere bagatelle," he remarked. "Dearest Adeline, do not distress yourself about this circumstance. I shall be repaid in sufficient time."

"*Hélas*," she replied mournfully, while a tear stood in her eye; "*ne comptez pas là-dessus*."

"By Heavens, so I thought," he muttered between his teeth. "Well, no matter," he resumed, taking her hand, and smiling; "I shall place it all to your account."

"*Grand Dieu!*" screamed Adeline, starting from

her seat, and rushing forward to the card-table, where her mother was playing. Clifford turned, and in the next instant beheld her tearing off Madame Dorjeville's toque, which was in a flame, and already threatened destruction to the rest of her dress. The women on either side had retreated from the danger, and holding up their hands in silent horror, without dreaming of offering the slightest assistance, were directing her in what manner to proceed. Delmaine at once saw that the flame was only to be extinguished by suffocation, and snatching up a rich shawl which lay upon the ottoman next him, he threw it over her head, pressing it round her neck, so as to exclude the air altogether.

"*J'étouffe*," faintly issued from beneath the folds, and in the next instant Madame Dorjeville fell back in his arms, and fainted.

"*Mon schall, mon schall, Oh Dieu, mon schall de cachemire!*" screamed a female from the group, who now, for the first time, identified her property in the singular extinguisher thus employed. "*Monsieur, vous avez abimé mon schall.*"

The whole of the party engaged at the table, where the accident occurred, were in a state of the utmost confusion. The table had been overturned at the moment Madame Dorjeville fainted, and cards, bougies, and money, lay scattered in every direction. All were now scrambling for their stakes, and literally knocking their heads together in their eagerness to secure them. The players at the other tables, however, continued their game, as if nothing had happened. Indeed this was not surprising, for it could scarcely be expected that the conflagration of Paris itself, much less that of a woman's head-dress, should distract a regular set of players and betters at *écarté*.

At length cards, lights, and money were restored to their several places, and when the confusion had somewhat abated, they began to inquire of each other how the accident had occurred.

"Ah," cried an old lady, who found herself five

francs minus, at the end of the scramble for the stakes, "that Madame Dorjeville is so impetuous—*elle montre toujours tant d'humeur lorsqu'elle perd*. When she lost the game, she rose so impatiently, that she overturned her chair, and while stooping to pick it up, her head-dress caught in the flame of the bougie. Apropos," she added, "I have lost five francs by this *gaucherie*. Who has picked up five francs too much?"

No one, of course, answered in the affirmative, and the old lady continued to mutter observations to herself about the aptness of some people to lose their temper at play, and the liability of others to take up more money than they actually had a right to, until the game was resumed.

Madame Dorjeville had, in the mean time, regained her senses, and having discovered that she had sustained no other injury than the loss of her toque, which was replaced by a turban from the wardrobe of Madame Bourdeaux, she expressed her determination to renew the game. It was in vain that Adeline expostulated, and endeavoured to persuade her to retire. Her mother was deaf to all she had to say; and when, in the next instant, she saw Delmaine comply with another demand on his purse, she coloured highly with shame and vexation. Her hands had been slightly burnt, in the act of assisting her mother, and this she now made a pretext for retiring. Approaching Clifford, therefore, with burning cheeks and downcast eyes, she inquired if he was ready to accompany her. He coolly replied that he was, and the indifference of his manner again fell like an ice-chill on her heart; they descended to the court, and proceeded to the Rue-de la Chaussée d'Antin in silence; but no sooner had they reached her apartments, than Adeline threw her head on his bosom, and sobbed violently. The heart of Delmaine was not proof against this expression of her grief; he raised her up, and tenderly inquired the cause.

"Oh," she cried, "I am truly wretched. You will despise, you will hate me; the conduct of my mother

has evidently disgusted you this evening, and I see that you condemn me equally with her. But," she pursued, "if you knew how much I have been hurt and wounded, you would pity me. I am an unhappy girl indeed; but whatever may be my faults, my love for you is sincere and disinterested. Could I have foreseen the events of this day, I should have guarded against them; but that was impossible. Alas! I am wretched, sick, and unhappy, for I am apprehensive of losing your affection—yet feel," she added, with energy, and seizing his hand, which she placed on her throbbing bosom—"feel how my heart beats, how it has continued to beat ever since I first beheld you."

"I will not go to Frascati's to-night," thought Clifford, as he listened to the unrestrained avowal of her feelings. "Dear Adeline," he exclaimed, when she had finished her last passionate appeal, "compose yourself. Believe me, your fears are perfectly groundless; neither should you imagine that I attach any importance to these circumstances. Your mother certainly does seem to act very imprudently, and I candidly confess that, as you admit there is little probability of my being repaid, my finances will not bear any more of these heavy drafts, which are only required to be squandered at the *écarté* table. But how can I be so unjust, my love, as to impute blame to you, who certainly seem to have but little influence over your mother?"

"I feel all the generosity of your remark," replied Adeline, greatly soothed by the kindness of his manner; "but, alas! it is but too much the custom for mothers to profit by the attachments formed by their daughters; nay, it is often a stipulation that they shall share the advantages resulting from *liaisons* of this description. Yet, whatever, my mother may do—however strange and interested her conduct may appear—oh, promise that you will never condemn me—that you will never deem me capable of lending myself to any thing half so disreputable—say that you will believe that you,

and you only, are the real object of my affection." And again she buried her face in his bosom.

"This is no Clémence," thought our hero; "be the unworthy suspicion which I entertained, then, for ever crushed. Dear, dear Adeline," he replied, clasping her passionately to his breast, "I will believe any thing that you desire. Nay, why should I doubt what you assert? The very circumstance of your entering into this explanation is sufficient, and, from this moment, I love you more tenderly than ever."

"Oh! of what a weight have you not relieved me!" she returned, raising her face, and smiling through her tears. "How shall I study to deserve your affection?"

"By loving me with passion—deep, fervent, burning passion," said Delmaine, as he caught her wildly to his heart, and imprinted his lips on hers.

From this moment the attachment of our hero for Adeline visibly increased. She had cast the spell of her enchantments around him, until, gradually withdrawing himself from the society of his friends, he became her constant companion in the circles wherein they had first met, and she was everywhere known, and tacitly acknowledged, as his mistress. Had she studied her own inclinations, she would have avoided these public haunts as much as possible; but Delmaine himself found them necessary to his happiness, for they had a powerful tendency to distract his mind from reflections which, despite even of the apparent affection and devotedness of Adeline, but too frequently assailed him. They were constantly to be seen in the public promenades by day, and at night they repaired together to the different *salons*, where our hero soon unhappily acquired a love for play, which was fast leading him to ruin. In vain did Adeline attempt to dissuade him from entering so deeply into this destructive habit. What he had at first essayed with a view to distraction, now became a passion, and, among the first at the *écarté* table at night, and the last in the morning, was to be seen the infatuated Delmaine, who, prior to his introduction to these haunts,

had never been known to touch a card, except at whist, and for limited stakes. The fever of excitement, produced by a constant succession of good or ill fortune, rendered his temper irritable, and warm discussions frequently ensued, which threatened to embroil him, at every instant, with individuals, some of whom were by no means of a description to confer credit upon him by a quarrel, and with whom, in his moments of cooler reflection, he would have blushed to see his name mixed up before the public. Adeline saw this with pain and regret; for she knew enough of his character to be satisfied that he would make no concession, and that the most alarming consequences were only to be prevented by the bounds applied to the warmth of language of the parties with whom his discussions took place. Sometimes, on these occasions, she lingered near, and sought to soothe him into composure; but, by a strange perversity of feeling, he imagined this to arise solely out of a desire to find him in error, and, piqued at the impression, his passions were, of course, only more violently aroused, and she finally desisted. Nay, even in their hours of retirement, Adeline frequently experienced a change in his manner; but as he was ever warm in his professions of undiminished attachment, whenever her mild expostulations and complaints reached his ear, she was easily induced to pardon, and find excuses for his conduct.

The income of Delmaine consisted only of five hundred a year, three of which he inherited from his father, a younger brother of Sir Edward. He had lost his mother in early infancy, and was left when eight years of age, under the care of his uncle, when Major Delmaine embarked with his regiment for foreign service. The affection which Sir Edward bore to his brother, who was some years his junior, was excessive; and when, after the battle of Corunna, the distressing fact of the gallant major's fall in that memorable engagement, was announced to him, his mind was overwhelmed with grief. The warm and simple affections of his nature were, how-

ever, eventually transferred to his nephew. Sir Edward was possessed of one of the best hearts that ever tenanted a human breast, and although his own education had been neglected for the more alluring and exciting pleasures of the chase, of which he had ever been passionately fond, he was resolved that no pains should be spared on that of his favourite nephew.

Nor was Clifford the only object of his solicitude. Harry Wilmot, the unfortunate youth alluded to by O'Sullivan, in a former part of our story, was also an orphan intrusted to his guardianship by his dying mother, a first cousin of his own. As they were nearly of the same age, Sir Edward determined that the young men should enter upon their studies together. Accordingly, after having gone through a preparatory course of education, the cousins were finally sent to Cambridge, where Clifford particularly distinguished himself by his close application and facility of acquirement. To Wilmot, however, who was of a peculiarly wild and thoughtless character, study was a bore, and a college life a restraint; and while the vacations of our hero were almost invariably passed with his uncle, either in town, or at his seat in ———— shire, those of Wilmot were spent among a set of dissipated young men, whose sole competition seemed to be who should throw away the most money in the shortest time. On attaining his twenty-first year, he declared college, its pursuits, and even his talented cousin, so many nuisances, and hastening to his uncle, received from him the small fortune which had been intrusted to his care. Sir Edward tried remonstrance, but in vain, and when at length Wilmot, warmed by opposition to his plans, inquired if he was not of an age to judge for himself, the baronet felt all the ingratitude of his conduct, and yielding up his deposit, bade him go to the devil his own way.

This was what Wilmot desired, for though he was not really deficient in regard for his uncle, his own pleasures weighed too heavily in the opposite scale, and he took him at his word. He immediately set off for the

continent, and Clifford had only left college a year when the account of his cousin's death, in a duel in Paris, reached Sir Edward. The heart of the good old baronet was too affectionate, his nature too kind, not to mourn over the untimely fate of the inconsiderate Wilmot, with whom he now bitterly repented having parted in anger : as there was nothing, however, with which, on a review of his conduct, he could reproach himself, he was eventually consoled by that reflection. On Clifford no such violent emotion was produced. He regretted his cousin, more as one with whom he had been brought up from his earliest years, than as a dear and lamented friend, for Wilmot had ever evinced a repugnance to intimacy, which the naturally proud spirit of our hero prevented any attempt on his part to surmount ; and to this want of cordiality between the young men, must be attributed the comparatively trifling interest evinced by Delmaine in his conversation with O'Sullivan.

In consequence of this event, Delmaine became the sole surviving relative of the baronet, whose affection was, if possible, increased by the circumstance of his being the exclusive object on which his feelings and interests reposed. He was the last scion of an ancient and proud family, and Sir Edward could not endure the idea of the name and title becoming extinct. It was, therefore, his fondest wish to see his nephew married to some woman of family, through whom the name might be transmitted to posterity, for although possessed of the manners and indulging in the pursuits of a mere country gentleman, Sir Edward was highly aristocratic—a feeling which had led him more than once secretly to triumph in the proud and independent spirit of his nephew. The property attached to the title was in itself but small ; but the baronet had a considerable sum vested in the funds and other public securities, half of which he intended giving him on the day of his marriage : the remainder Delmaine was to have at his death. His disappointment had been extreme on finding that, among the numerous women, celebrated either for their beauty,

their family, or their accomplishments, whom he every where met on his return from college, he had not distinguished one by any particular mark of favour ; yet as this was a subject to which he was resolved not to advert, from a disinclination to bias or influence his nephew in a choice, which, though a bachelor himself, he well knew to be the most important step in life, he seldom indulged in the expression of any particular anxiety to see his views accomplished.

Such was the state of things when they embarked for the continent, when Sir Edward increased the income of his nephew, from three hundred a year, which he inherited from his father, to five hundred—a sum which he conceived to be quite sufficient for the expenses and rational amusement of a young man of four and twenty. We are already aware of the hope he entertaind of seeing Clifford united to the daughter of his early and estimable friend—a hope which, since his arrival in Paris, had almost been nursed into conviction ; we have also seen how that hope was disappointed.

It may readily be supposed, that, indulging so constantly in play and other extravagant pursuits, Clifford was not long in finding his income inadequate to his necessities ; and that as he knew not in what manner to obtain supplies, he was not unfrequently involved in embarrassments, from which he found it difficult to extricate himself. In order, therefore to reduce his expenses, he gave up his apartments in the Hôtel des Princes, merely reserving one room for his servant, and took up his abode altogether with Adeline. But even the retrenchments effected by this measure were insufficient : for so infatuated had he become with play, so necessary did he find it as a resource, that his time was now divided between the *écarté*, and the more destructive and absorbing temptations of the *rouge et noir* and *roulette* tables. Having, on one occasion, returned home, after an unusual run of ill luck, he endeavoured in vain to devise some plan by which his finances might be recruited. As he sat ruminating, with his head lean-

ing on his hand, and his eyes fixed on the fire, he heard a sound of voices in the *anti-chambre*, as if in dispute. Adeline, at his request, went to see what was the matter, and soon returned with a folded paper in her hand.

"It is your tailor's bill," she said, handing it to him; "that vile Laroux, to whom you have paid so much money—he insists on having the amount immediately."

Delmaine opened it; it was for two hundred francs. How humiliated did he feel at the idea of being compelled to say, that he could not command so paltry a sum.

"*Je n'ai plus un sou !*" he sighed, returning her the paper, and again relapsing into the same painful train of reflection.

Adeline returned to the *anti-chambre*, and he heard her say to the man, "*Apportez-le demain, vous aurez votre argent.*"

The fellow made some apology about his being pressed for money—was sorry to trouble Mr. Delmaine—thanked her, and said he would call again on the following day.

"Why, my love, did you not tell him at once, that I could not pay it for some time?" he observed, mournfully, on her return. "We shall have him here pestering us to-morrow, and Heaven knows, I have no means of raising even this trifling sum so soon as you have named."

"Delmaine, dear Delmaine," cried Adeline, with emotion, and throwing herself upon his bosom, "you know not the pain I feel, at seeing you thus tormented by these miserable wretches. Alas! had it not been for me, you would never have been exposed to these cruel embarrassments; can I, therefore, be selfish enough not to assist you in difficulties, which I have been instrumental in creating? I have no money, it is true, but I have jewels to the amount of several thousand francs—take them, they are yours—do what you will with them—only let me see you happy;" and she wept.

"Dear, generous girl," exclaimed Delmaine, clasping her to his heart, "this, indeed, is kind; but I cannot think of making you the victim of my follies. Let the fellow wait until it suits my convenience."

"That he certainly will not," replied Adeline, "for he threatened to summon you before the Juge de Paix, and you have yet to learn how apt people of that description are to decide every thing against a foreigner. But this is not all. Several other bills have been sent, of which you know nothing, since I would not give you pain by acquainting you with an evil that you could not remedy. I know not how it is, but they seem to be aware of your embarrassments, and are all equally pressing for money. Promise me," she pursued, in a tone of persuasion, "that you will make use of my jewels—you know you can return them to me when you get over your difficulties; and these, I am sure," she added, "would not be of long continuance, were you but to relinquish play."

"I will accept them, Adeline, if necessary, for I fully understand and appreciate your feeling in offering them: but the fact is, it now occurs to me, that De Forsac owes me a sum of money more than sufficient to defray these petty demands. I shall go to him immediately for it. This, at least, will do away the necessity for them for the present."

Adeline raised herself from his shoulder—gazed earnestly at him, and shook her head. "*Ne comptez pas là-dessus*," she murmured.

"And why not?" demanded Clifford, impetuously, as, with the rapidity of lightning, the recollection of the conversation between the two Englishmen flashed across his mind; but when he remarked the deep expression of interest on her countenance, and recalled the offer of sacrifice which she had just made, the unworthy suspicion was again dispelled. "We shall see," he added, after a pause, and rising to depart.

"You will dine with me?" said Adeline, inquiringly.

"Certainly," replied Delmaine, "as soon as I have seen De Forsac I shall return."

"And shall we once again enjoy an evening alone?" she rejoined. Delmaine glanced at her with a look of fire. Her cheek burned, and her blue eyes shrunk beneath their long lashes, as they encountered his.

"We shall!" he added passionately, and then sallied forth on his mission.

He found De Forsac dressing for a dinner party. They had not met for some days, and the marquis now inquired what he had done with himself during that period. "By-the-bye," he added, "I never see you at the Rue de la Paix, at present. Something has been whispered of a rupture. Is this the case?"

"Why, I believe that I am not on the best of terms with any of the party," returned Clifford, carelessly. "The fact is, that certain circumstances have occurred, which prevent my appearing there quite so often as formerly."

De Forsac well knew what these circumstances were. "I dined with your friends yesterday," he observed, laying particular emphasis on the word "friends." "Your name was mentioned in the course of conversation; but, I thought, with the most perfect indifference; and as I really felt pained on your account, I inquired of Miss Stanley, who sat next to me, whether you were as constant a visiter as ever. She said, 'that she believed you had not been there for some time, but that, in fact, she could not give herself the trouble to recollect how long.' Do you know, I thought the observation very unkind in one, for whom it is so generally known that you risked your life."

Clifford thought so too: for, although satisfied that he had no right to complain, he felt not a little piqued at this communication. "*Vous savez que les dames sont souvent capricieuses,*" he remarked.

This was uttered with apparent levity and indifference; but De Forsac clearly saw that the sting had taken effect. "*A propos!*" he asked, as he put the

last touch to the arrangement of his cravat, "*comment vont les amours et le jeu? La Fortune vous favorise-t-elle?*"

"*Diablement mal!*" said Clifford; "and, by the way, this reminds me of the object of my visit. I am literally done up—*enfoncé*—and am come to beg some money of you. Can you spare me the amount of what I lent you some time ago?"

"My dear fellow, what you ask is quite impossible just at this moment," returned the marquis, faintly colouring. "I am quite out of cash, and had even thought of borrowing from you myself."

"But," said Delmaine, moving towards a well-filled purse, which, most unfortunately for the veracity of the Frenchman, lay on the dressing table, "you can at least spare me a part of the contents of this."

De Forsac took up the purse in evident alarm.

"This money is not mine," he said; "but if twenty Louis will be sufficient for you, I can take it upon myself to lend them to you."

"Lend them!" repeated Clifford, involuntarily, and emphatically—but, checking his feelings, "twenty Louis will do for the present," he observed. One end of the purse was filled with gold, the other with notes. De Forsac carefully counted out twenty pieces.

"I wish I could fall in with some rich old money lender, who would take a bill at six months, at even fifty per cent.," sighed our hero, as he consigned the gold to his own empty purse.

"Do you really wish to raise money on these terms?" eagerly inquired De Forsac. "If so, I dare say I can contrive to procure you a supply."

"Wish it! of course I do. I have no money whatever. and should be glad to procure some on any terms. Do you know any one who would be willing to advance me any?"

"I think," said De Forsac, "I know a person who may. I formerly had transactions with him to a large amount, and I have no doubt that, in consideration of our long acquaintance, he will not object to accommodate a friend of mine."

"Then see him by all means, if possible. Can the affair be terminated to-morrow?"

"I dare say it can," said De Forsac. "What amount will you require?"

"Twenty thousand francs, at least," replied Delmaine.

"Twenty thousand francs will be a large sum for him; but I shall do what I can. You agree then to give fifty per cent.? That you know will make your bills thirty thousand."

"I both know and agree to it," rejoined our hero, "provided of course the money cannot be had on more moderate terms; but you will, I am sure, make the best bargain you can."

"You may rely upon it, I *shall* make the best bargain I can," observed De Forsac, emphatically, and smiling to himself in the mirror, in which he was adjusting a superb diamond pin.

"You seem to be amused, Marquis," said Delmaine, who had remarked this singular expression both of tone and countenance.

"I was merely thinking how surprised the old fellow will be to see me once more," returned De Forsac, colouring at the detection.

"Well, then, at what hour shall we meet to-morrow, and where?"

"Say at your own hotel; you are still in the Rue de Richelieu, are you not?"

"No, I am with Adeline Dorjeville, at present," said Clifford, somewhat confusedly; "we occupy the same apartments."

"*Ah! déjà si avancé!—je vous en fais mon compliment,*" drawled forth De Forsac, with a half-suppressed sneer. "Do you recollect," he pursued in English, "what difficulty I had in persuading you to meet her at Astelli's? You ought to be very much obliged to me, indeed;" and never was the feeling of hate more predominant in his bosom, than at that moment. When he turned away from the glass, he was pale.

"Endeavour then to be in the Rue de la Chaussée

d'Antin to-morrow, at three o'clock precisely," he observed ; " I shall see the man early in the morning, and when I have arranged every thing with him, we shall proceed together to your hotel."

This point being settled, Clifford took his leave. The original impression excited by De Forsac's disinclination to refund the money he had borrowed, was now overlooked in the readiness he had evinced to assist him to a much larger amount, and in a much more essential manner.

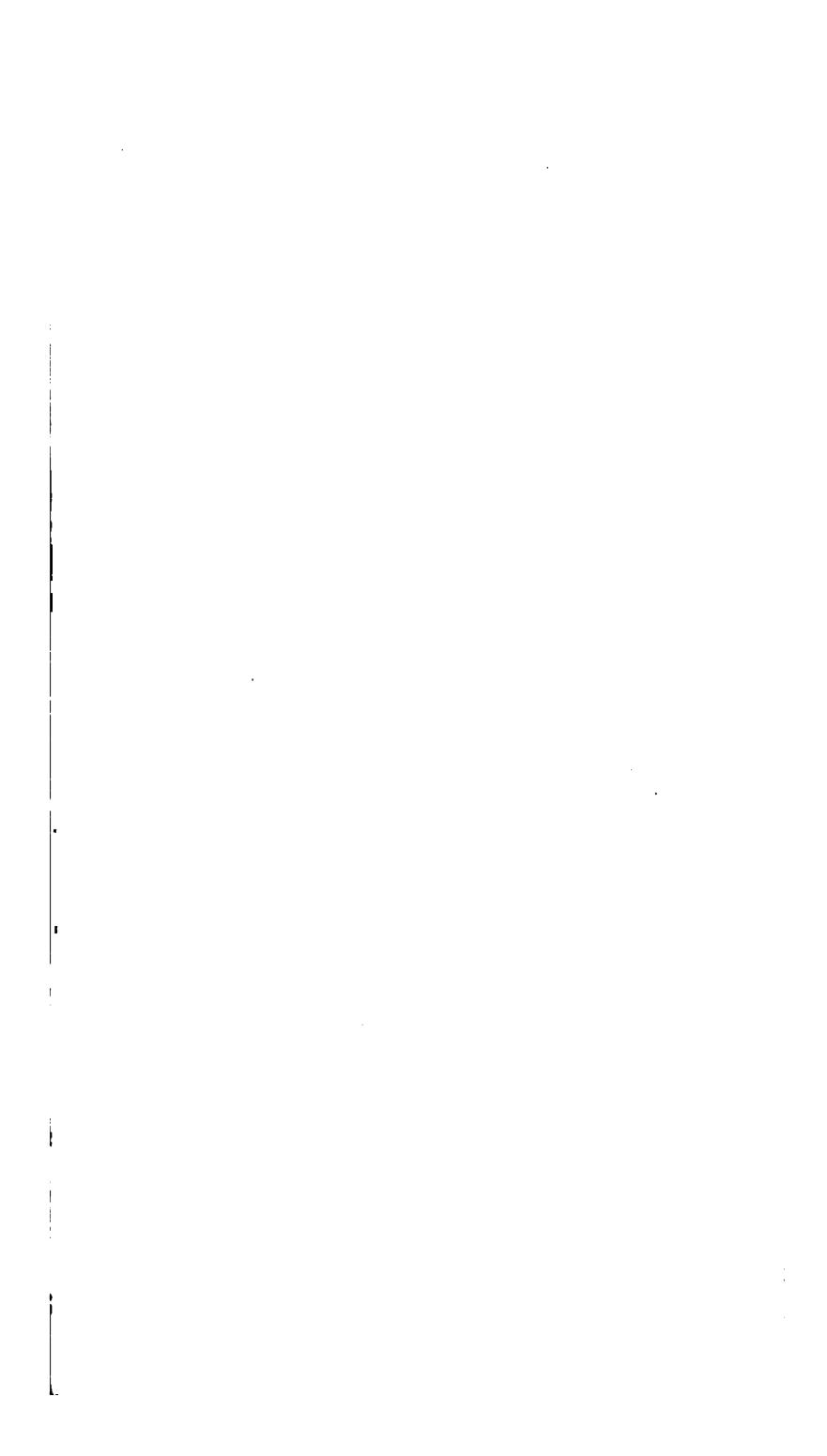
" *Eh bien, mon ami, as-tu réussi ?*" inquired Adeline, as he entered with a smile upon his countenance.

Clifford displayed his now tolerably well stocked purse—" *Voici ma réponse !*" he exclaimed ; " *il est vrai que c'est bien peu de chose, mais nous en aurons encore demain.*"

Adeline raised her eyes with an expression of astonishment. " *Il paraît qu'il a des fonds aujourd'hui ; voici toujours de quoi payer ce vilain tailleur ; mais vraiment compes-tu en recevoir de lui demain ?*"

Delmaine then proceeded to explain the arrangements he had made with the marquis for the twenty thousand francs, and to this Adeline listened with deep and painful interest. In vain, however, did she urge him not to sacrifice so great a sum for a mere temporary convenience. He was deaf to all she had to say ; and when she again requested him to make use of her diamonds, until his affairs were somewhat settled, he only replied by a declaration, that he could not endure the idea of her appearing in public bereft of those ornaments, the absence of which might induce her friends to suspect how they had actually been disposed of. Finding every remonstrance ineffectual, she at length yielded up the point, and, inspired with even greater love than ever for him, in consequence of this generous conduct, enjoyed the fullest measure of a happiness, which, until that night, she fancied she had never sufficiently estimated.

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